



THE INDEPENDENT

Wednesday 12 November 1997 (IR50p) 45p No 3,452

He gave £1m to Labour, and £14m to the Tories. What did he expect in return?

Bernie Ecclestone, the head of Formula One racing, made donations of £1m to Labour and £10m to the Tories, topped up with a £4m loan. Anthony Bevis and Kim Sengupta examine charges of sleaze engulfing the parties.

Both John Major and William Hague offered Mr Ecclestone a knighthood following his donations to Tory coffers, it was alleged yesterday. Well-placed political sources said Mr Major entertained Mr Ecclestone to lunch at Chequers before the election, and Mr Hague is said to have sent a letter to the Prime Minister, submitting Mr Ecclestone's name for a knighthood.

The disclosure that Mr Ecclestone had given £1m to Labour - now to be returned following the highly unexpected advice offered by Sir Patrick Neill QC, chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life - followed a day of speculation about the precise amount.

Labour's initial defence of secrecy was that the amount was private between the donor and the party, and could only be divulged by agreement. That publicity agreement had covered the £1m donation made by Matthew Harding, vice-chairman of Chelsea Football Club, before his death in a helicopter crash last year.

Because Mr Ecclestone had handed over his money in January, his name was not even included in the list of people who had donated more than £5,000 in the party last year.

That list, which includes people like Jeremy Irons, Paul Hamlyn, Sir David Puttnam, Ruth Rendell, and David Sainsbury, and companies like Tate & Lyle, Sun Life Corporation, Kingfisher Group, and Mirror Group, part-owners of *The Independent*, could now come under more intense scrutiny.

The Prime Minister's office suggested that if a more generous-than-expected national minimum wage was introduced, trade union donations might

have to be sent back, and that if ministers decided to help ban fox-hunting, similar donations from the Political Animal Lobby might have to be returned.

But the Prime Minister's spokesman added zest to the controversy by saying that donations and actions taken by the Conservatives might also have to come under scrutiny.

The more substantial contributions made by the building, brewing and tobacco industries over many years - taken with ministerial decisions affecting those industries - could open a Pandora's Box for the Conservative high command.

Over the years, it has been alleged that Tory ministers have been switched or sacked for "taking nm" the tobacco lobby, and a 1989 Monopolies and Mergers Committee report on the brewing industry was undoubtedly watered down.

Paddy Ashdown said yesterday that he had personally rejected the offer of a £1m donation before the last election, an offer which *The Independent* has been told came from Mohamed Al Fayed.

As for the offer of a knighthood to Mr Ecclestone, a Tory spokesman said last night: "There are matters on which we must deal with Downing Street on a confidential basis, as they fall under Privy Councillor terms."

The mystery increased last night when *The Independent* was told that Mr Ecclestone's name had been submitted to Number 10 for a knighthood by Mr Major, but that it had been struck off by Mr Blair. In fact, Mr Ecclestone's name was not on any list put in Number 10 by Mr Major.

The immediate result of Sir Patrick's ruling, apart from the return of the £1m by cash-strapped Labour, is an acceleration of legislation to bring in greater "transparency" of political donations above £5,000, and a ban on foreign funding of political parties.

Over the longer term, however, with Sir Patrick's committee about to embark on an inquiry into political funding, the odds are very much on a statutory limit being imposed on party election spending.



Hands off: Bernie Ecclestone arrives at a Formula One meeting yesterday

Photograph: Paul Hackett/Reuters

INSIDE TODAY

THE EYE
The Fast Show is back. That's nice
FASHION/18
Take home Kate
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TODAY'S NEWS

Woodward family pull down the shutters

One day after walking free from the court that only last month had convicted her of second-degree murder and sentenced her to life, Louise Woodward found herself in a new sort of prison yesterday: a room at a Hyatt Hotel on the perimeter of Boston's Logan Airport.

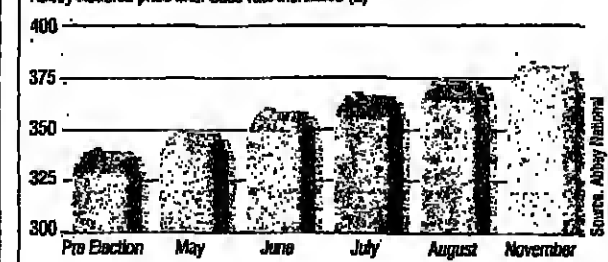
The proximity to planes, however, seemed only poignant. Freedom for Woodward was only relative. Her passport still in the hands of the state, she remains unable to leave the country or indeed Massachusetts. Meanwhile, the Woodwards and all their supporters were effectively ordered by her defence team to show restraint and limit contacts with the press. Last night, Louise broke her silence with a brief statement that thanked the judge and repeated her sorrow over the death of Matthew Eappen.

At the same time, the defence and the prosecution pondered strategies for their appeals. Both sides are expected to file their formal appeal notices with the Massachusetts appeals court as early as today. The entire process could take a year - during which time Woodward will effectively be marooned.

Meanwhile, controversy over the judge's actions mounted in Boston. One juror from the trial, Edward Welch, said that while the reduction of the verdict to manslaughter did not bother him, the time-served sentence most certainly did. Pages 4 and 5

The cost of a £50,000 mortgage since Labour came to power

Abbey National price after base rate increases (%)



Mortgage rate up

A quarter point mortgage rate increase announced by Abbey National yesterday means the typical homebuyer will be paying £42 a month, or £502 a year, more on their loan compared with before the general election. Page 24.

More talks on Iraq

Diplomats at the UN were still working last night on a resolution to force Iraq to end its obstruction of weapons inspection teams. Baghdad shows no sign of backing down. President Clinton's strategy has been to combine fresh warnings to Saddam Hussein with attempts to forge a united front at the UN. Page 15

Girl power goes too far

The Advertising Standards Authority has warned agencies against a trend for so-called "Girl Power" ads that show women being violent towards men. Page 11

Health spending power will switch to GPs

Billions of pounds are to be transferred to local groups of family doctors in a fundamental shake-up of the health service. Jeremy Laurence, Health Editor, reveals an ambitious plan to break down the barriers between hospitals, GPs and community services.

An overhaul of the NHS more radical than expected is proposed in a government White Paper due for publication before the end of the year, details of which have been leaked to *The*

Independent. As well as ending the internal market and abolishing GP fundholding, the White Paper will begin a process of reshaping the NHS to reflect modern health needs.

The drivers of the new service will be local collectives of GPs, which will control over 90 per cent of the NHS's £34bn annual budget. Each collective will number around 50 GPs serving about 100,000 population and will hold a single budget for hospital, primary and community care.

The single budget will mean the GPs can decide whether to hire more community nurses so people can be cared for in their homes or spend more on pre-

scribing rather than sending patients to hospital.

Ministers believe a model is provided by the strategy for improving cancer services drawn up by Sir Kenneth Calman, the chief medical officer, in 1995, which aims to ensure all patients have access to high-quality specialist services.

The aim is to break down the "Berlin walls" which separate health and community care, in Secretary of State for Health Frank Dobson's phrase, whose separate budgets mean patients cannot easily be transferred between them. This has led to hospital beds blocked by patients who should be cared for at home. No timescale is put on

the changes which are seen as evolutionary, not revolutionary.

The GP collectives, which will function as mini-health authorities, will vary in size according to local geography and

EXCLUSIVE

need. They will have service agreements with local hospitals - contracts by another name - and may switch them if the service provided is not up to scratch. They will replace the existing system of GP fundholding, under which individual

practices hold their own budgets, which has been blamed for increasing inequity in the NHS.

Existing health authorities, whose number is likely to be cut, will be left only with the budget for "tertiary" services - specialist treatments such as heart transplants - which account for less than 10 per cent of total NHS spending. They will be given a new role devising health improvement programmes with locally-agreed targets as part of the Government's public health strategy.

The abolition of the internal market and the loss of competition between NHS trusts removes an important lever to efficiency in the NHS. In its

place, the White Paper envisages tighter management from the centre based on measurements of hospital performance. Tough questions would be asked where hospitals deviated significantly from the norm.

An example cited is the Government's response to the Exeter breast-screening scandal, in which mammograms were misread and some women developed cancer that should have been detected.

A National Institute for Clinical Effectiveness is also proposed to mastermind a drive to improve quality and ensure doctors are kept up to date with latest developments.

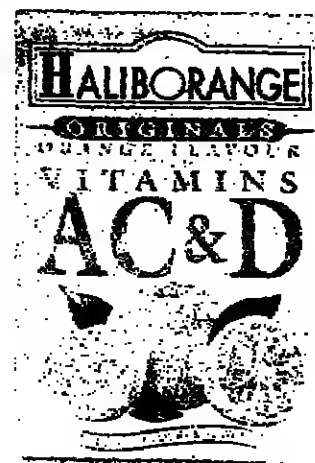
Leading article, page 20

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HALIBORANGE



COLUMN ONE

Court helps women shatter glass ceilings

A court in Luxembourg struck a blow for women's right to jump the job queue, shattering glass ceilings in offices across the continent. The all-male judges of the European Court ruled yesterday that positive discrimination was a Good Thing; that unequal treatment of job applicants was an acceptable means for achieving "equal opportunity".

"A victory for women," proclaimed Karin Junker, a German Social Democrat MEP. Padraig Flynn, the EU's social affairs and employment commissioner, purred with delight: "The Court has recognised that certain deep-rooted prejudices and stereotypes as to the role and capacities of women in working life still persist. It has concluded from this that priority given to equally-qualified women ... is not contrary to Community law."

It is all the fault of one man unable to come to terms with rejection. Three years ago, Hellmuth Marshall, then 39-year-old teacher at a German comprehensive school, applied for promotion and lost out - to a woman. Mr Marshall took the regional authorities, the Land of North Rhine-

Westphalia, to court. The local judiciary were unable to unravel the complexities of the case, and passed the buck upwards.

Everyone thought Mr Marshall could not lose. Two years ago, a civil servant from Bremen, Eckhard Kalanke, had won a similar case in Luxembourg against his employers. The judges then argued that the Mr Kalanke had been at the receiving end of "automatic job selection", which shut them out of promotions without a cursory glance at their CV.

The now notorious Kalanke verdict caused chaos through Europe. From Ireland to Greece, employers

promoting positive discrimination found themselves breaking the law. The European Commission declared it a setback for women's rights and vowed to push for clearer legislation across the Community.

How clear it is now will no doubt be a matter of protracted - and lucrative - legal argument. Unlike the Bremen case, the judges ruled, Mr Marshall's employment were not operating an "automatic" selection system. The court decided the law was not unfair to men because, while it gave women candidates priority, it did not give them automatic, unconditional preference.

The affirmative action law only applied to the public sector, and only in cases where men outnumber women in senior jobs. The judges confirmed that EU law allowed governments to take action to redress inequality between men and women in the work-place, "provided that an objective assessment of each individual candidate, irrespective of their sex, is assured".

"This is an historic day for women in Europe," said Ilse Ridder-Melchers, equal opportunities minister of North Rhine-Westphalia. "The decision of the European Court of Justice finally draws a line under years of legal wrangling which has been to the detriment of women."

That should come as a relief to her legal department, currently fighting 109 sexual discrimination cases brought by men in local courts. There are eight other regions in Germany whose governments operate similar policies, and fighting similar court battles.

Mr Marshall is vowing to fight on, but so are his adversaries. The all-male court which made yesterday's landmark decision is one of the first targets. "Male rule in Luxembourg must be brought to an end," declared Ms Junker, the MEP.

— Inye Karos

PEOPLE



Guard of honour: Mary McAleese at her Dublin inauguration yesterday Photograph: Reuters

President McAleese plays a populist tune

To the gentle strains of Handel the avowed nationalist Mary McAleese, who hails from the Ardoyne in Belfast, took office as Ireland's eighth president on Armistice Day, pledging to hurry hatches of the past and make a virtue of her country's diversity.

Her inauguration was both regal and populist. On a bright, crisp autumn day beneath a cloudless sky she was swept in the elegant 1948 presidential Rolls Royce led by 36 army motorcyclists into a Dublin Castle courtyard crammed with 1,000 children from around the island.

They cheered every arrival, from the SDLP leader, John Hume, author Brian Keenan and poet Seamus Heaney, to Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin President, and Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. They cheered the disgraced Prime Minister, Charles Haughey, weeks after he was booted here after lying to a judicial tribunal. They even cheered an empty car.

After fanfares and drum rolls in the gilded

grandeur of St Patrick's Hall, hung with flags of Ireland's great families, Ms McAleese launched an equally grand holy quest for peace through partnership "as a wonderful millennium gift for the child of Bethlehem".

A new dynamic Ireland was now "tantalisingly close to a golden age of affluence, self-assurance, and tolerance ... our forbears dreamed of prospering, accomplished, educated, at the heart of the European Union," she claimed. Conceding "distrust goes deep and the challenge is awesome," she invited Unionists on Armistice Day to look to Europe "where once bitter enemies work conscientiously for each other as friends and partners".

Her presidency's theme would be "building bridges", she said. But her words were missed by invited Unionist leaders such as John Taylor, who, though supportive during her election, evidently saw attendance in person as a bridge too far.

— Alan Murdoch

Vicar sacked and defrocked after affair



An Anglican vicar is to be sacked and defrocked over his affair with a married parishioner.

The Rev Clifford Williams, 49, is the first cleric in the Church of Wales to be stripped of his office. Rev Williams, who has three children, has also been given notice to leave the rectory at Benlech, Anglesey and will lose his £13,000 annual income.

But last night he said he would fight to clear his name and added that he was taking legal advice on whether to seek a review of the legality of the church's proceedings by a high court judge.

Announcing his decision, the Bishop of Bangor, the Rt Rev Barry Morgan, said: "I believe that if he were to exercise a public ministry in the church, Mr Williams would be a danger to those entrusted to his care."

Last month, a church provincial court, the first to sit in 50 years, found him guilty of adultery after

a three-week hearing. His former lover, Iris Green, said Mr Williams pursued her three times after she ended their relationship. His wife, Gwendolyn, said she wanted a divorce. "My immediate aim at the moment is to clear my name. That is what we are working for and aiming for".

Mr Williams is being backed by his union, the Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union. Its North Wales regional officer Peter Leverton said: "The bishop is using very extreme and unwarranted language in suggesting that Rev Williams is a danger to the public."

— Kate Watson-Smyth

BBC rolls back the years for Lottery show

Never let it be said that the BBC can't squeeze a little more out of a light entertainment formula that was set in stone in 1973.

Ten years of continuous revolution under John Birt and competition from satellite and cable mean nothing in the fantasy land where sets are made of chip board.

In a revolutionary revamp of the Saturday night National Lottery show the BBC has announced that it is to be hosted by a line up of rotating "big name entertainers". So far signed up is Bruce Forsyth, Ronnie Corbett, Shirley Bassey and Dame Edna Everage.

In an effort to give the show a more contemporary feel Eighties comedians Hale and Pace get a show and Nineties children's entertainers Ant and Dec have a go too.

But we can only cross our fingers that they never find little Lena Zavaroni.

— Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

UPDATE

HEALTH

Complementary medicine urged

The Government is being urged to encourage complementary medicine in the NHS after a survey found that barriers remain to its usage.

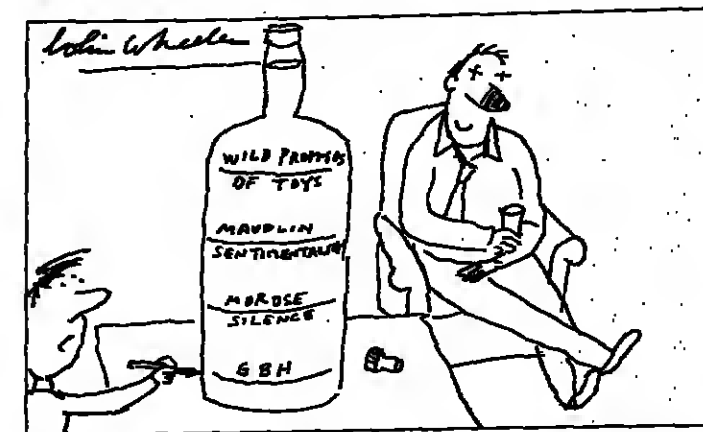
A study for the NHS Confederation found that in one area, Leicestershire, treatments such as aromatherapy and reflexology - once dismissed as the work of cranks by doctors - were now widely used within the NHS.

The survey of 651 health professionals showed a willingness to introduce complementary medicine at "grass roots" level in the NHS.

But there were four main barriers to further CM usage: -lack of knowledge of practitioners for referral, lack of available funds, concern about the competence of practitioners and therapists, and lack of effectiveness evidence. Only a Government programme could address these issues because health authorities and trusts had insufficient resources, said the Confederation, which represents health authorities and trusts.

ALCOHOL

Parents' drink threat to children



Nearly one million children are likely to be living with a parent whose drinking has reached harmful or risky levels, according to two reports.

The charities Alcohol Concern and ChildLine called for a national campaign similar to campaigns against drink-driving to help children whose parents have drink problems.

Both charities published reports which showed children were coping with parents who abused them physically and sexually, neglected them emotionally and failed to feed and clothe them properly. Many children had seen their mother or father unconscious, injured and bleeding, vomiting, or incontinent.

Marie, aged 14, said her alcoholic mother drank a bottle of vodka every day. "I have to tell her when to go to bed. I have to undress her. She is covered in cuts and bruises and never knows where she gets them - she falls down the stairs," she says.

● Alcohol Concern report, £7 from Waterbridge House, 32-6 Loman St London SE1. ChildLine report, £5 (plus 50p p&p) from Royal Mail Building, Studd St, London N1 0QW

— Glenda Cooper Social Affairs Correspondent

CONSUMERISM

Cosmetic surgery clinics warned

Clinics performing cosmetic surgery were ordered yesterday not to play down the risks of such operations in adverts.

The Advertising Standards Authority also warned them not to lay claim to being a "leading" establishment without being able to support it.

A "Harley Street" address should only be used in adverts if consultations or operations were actually carried out on the prestigious London street. Adverts should not gloss over painful, invasive surgery which will require a long recovery time as a "minor procedure".

Nor should they claim that liposuction on one area of the body will prevent overall weight gain, or that tattoos can be removed without trace, or that surgically replaced hair will last permanently.

The moves follow three complaints upheld against clinics this month.

TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.34	Italy (lira)	2,758
Austria (schillings)	19.68	Japan (yen)	206.6
Belgium (francs)	57.84	Malta (lira)	0.62
Canada (\$)	2.31	Netherlands (guilders)	3.15
Cyprus (pounds)	0.82	Norway (kroner)	11.45
Denmark (kroner)	10.73	Portugal (escudos)	284.3
France (francs)	9.38	Spain (pesetas)	235.7
Germany (marks)	2.81	Sweden (kroner)	12.32
Greece (drachmes)	443.3	Switzerland (francs)	2.29
Hong Kong (\$)	12.63	Turkey (lira)	295,926
Ireland (pounds)	1.08	USA (\$)	1.65

Source: Thomas Cook
Rates for information purposes only

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ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

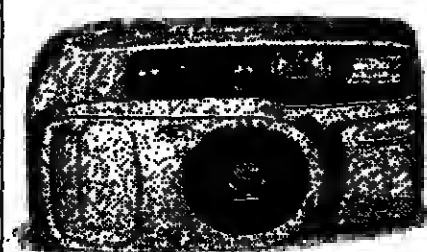


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by Chris Priestley

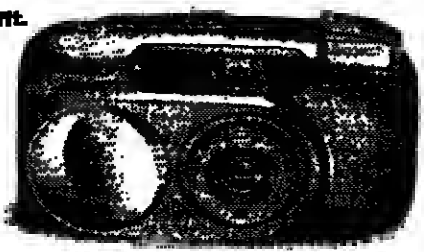


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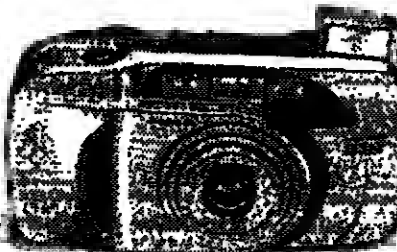
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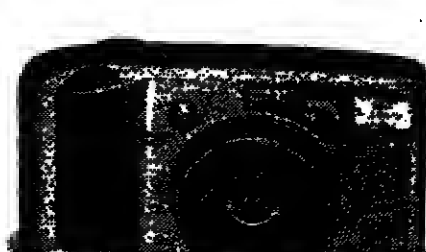
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3/LEADING STORIES

THE INDEPENDENT
WEDNESDAY
12 NOVEMBER 1997

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Picasso erotic dream breaks art record

The sale of the Ganz collection in New York has marked a return to the cricket-score art prices of the late 1980s. Geraldine Norman saw the hype translated into spectacular prices



At one session on Monday, Christopher Burge of Christie's knocked down lots for a total of \$207m

Picasso's portrait of his mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter titled *The Dream* was sold at Christie's in New York on Monday night for \$48.4m (£28.5m), the highest price paid for a Picasso since the market crash in 1990 and the second highest ever; another painting took \$51m at the height of the boom. Prices went crazy at the heavily publicised sale of 58 paintings from the modern art collection of Victor and Sally Ganz.

The Dream is one of a series of eight portraits Picasso made of Marie-Thérèse in the early 1930s - last on the market was *The Mirror* which made only \$20m in 1995. It is unquestionably an erotic dream. Marie-Thérèse sleeps in a chair, her softly smiling head tilted back. And Picasso has split her face in two, making the upper half echo the shape of a penis.

The winning bid on the painting was placed, very anonymously, by the sales clerk standing beside the auctioneer - this is the best trick for a bidder who wants to conceal his or her identity at auction.

The second highest price of the evening - and third highest for a Picasso - was the \$31m paid by London dealer Libby

ly, earlier this year, so the four children and the US tax man will split the proceeds. Virtually the whole Ganz fortune was tied up in art, so the tax man will take about \$120m, leaving the children some \$20m each. Not bad, considering their parents' total investment in art was less than \$2m. Kate Ganz, now a London art dealer, said the family was "overwhelmed - over the moon".

For 20 years, from 1941 to 1961, Victor and Sally bought only Picasso. Then they branched out into contemporary Americans, most notably Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Frank Stella.

America has gone crazy over the sale. A queue of people waiting to get into the exhibition ran right round the block over the weekend - despite torrential rain. Some 25,000 people managed to see the pictures. For the first time, Christie's turned four galleries into sale rooms and crammed in 2,000 people, with 70 telephone bidders.

The hype was translated into spectacular prices, particularly on the less expensive pieces. Lot 3 set the tone for the evening, a rectangle of paper, roughly 2ft by 3ft, inked a uniform black by Bruce Marden which sold for \$420,500 against an estimate of \$120,000-\$160,000. The fast Jasper Johns, *Corse and Mirror*, of 1974, secured \$836,500 against an estimate of \$3.5m-\$4.5m. The top price for Robert Rauschenberg was \$638,500, for *Red Interior* of 1954-55, a combine painting using velvet, oesprint and rocks.



Rich colour: Picasso's *The Dream* sold for \$48.4m (£28.5m) at Christie's in New York this week. The painting is one of 115 being auctioned from the collection of the late Victor and Sally Ganz. Photograph AP/Christie's

IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

THE EYE



Why all the fuss over Tibet?

A FAMILY TRAGEDY

One twin was kicked and punched to death protecting his father. A year after his murderers' were jailed, his brother committed suicide

Blue Nun: can we ever return to a Seventies habit?

It joined prawn cocktail and black forest gâteau as symbols of the decade that taste forgot. It was the wine that everyone loved to hate.

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the disco, Glenda Cooper, Consumer Affairs Correspondent, reports on the return of that Seventies favourite - Blue Nun.

It was the 18th-century French gastroome Anthelme Brillat-Savarin who once wrote that a meal without wine is like a day without sunshine. Presumably, he had never drunk Blue Nun.

The mainstay of the 1970s dinner party and oastional joke is back, now costing £3.99, although its makers claim it has never been away.

But of gibes it might have been - the comedian Barry Took once joked that if had been withdrawn the British would have nothing to clean their hubcaps with - yet in the 1970s the wine was the market

leader and we gulped down a million cases a year. By the mid-1990s this had fallen to fewer than 100,000.

"Obviously it had been around for a long time but the product had over really gone away," said Julian Eggar, marketing manager for Ehrenkrantz. "The brand had declined quite considerably since the 1970s and it was decided it needed updating."

But food writer Annie Bell was unsure whether it would succeed: "It's going back to that fondue, German wine and chicken Kiev era of the 1970s.

There is this retro trend at the moment but the difficulty for Blue Nun was that when it was popular in the Seventies there wasn't a lot of competition. Now there are an awful lot of wines around that are and I'm not even sure if sweet wine has come back into fashion."

To find out we asked a discerning panel of *Independent* journalists to blind taste Blue Nun, Riesling and Chablis (They were marked A, B and C).

Years of practice meant that Barrie Clement, Labour editor managed to name them all correctly (and drink them), in

record-breaking time: "A, Blue Nun, - too sweet and all sherry, B, Riesling - disgusting, tastes like something in an attic. C - this is Chablis."

Independent legal manager Louise Hayman was equally forthright in her analysis: "Urrgh. A is disgusting. It takes me back to disgusting flats in Putney and worrying about getting the nightbus home. B is a bit better (the Riesling). But I really like C (the Chablis)."

But the two younger members of the panel had not developed as sophisticated palates. Louise Hancock

diathered between the Riesling and the Blue Nun: "B is marginally worse than A I think... oh no, I've smelt A again and that's worse." But Paul McCann, media correspondent, topped the lot: "They all taste the same," he proclaimed, adding "but then I over drink wine that costs less than £18 a bottle, usually."

But Mr Eggar had a salutary word for people who were too snotty: "For all people say that they don't drink it, 120 million bottles of German medium sweet wine are sold each year so someone is drinking it."

NEW IMAGES FOR THE NAFF

The rebirth of Blue Nun is just the latest in a long list of attempts by companies to shake off an outdated image by undergoing a drastic make-over. Thanks to a successful relaunch, drinks such as Lucozade and Guinness, are now fashionable with the trendy and streetwise. The suede desert boot has also made a dramatic return: once worn by rebellious beatniks but more recently favoured by transpotters, it is a cult accessory again after pop idols, including Liam Gallagher and the Spice Girls, were seen sporting them.

One of the biggest transformations in recent times has been that of the Labour Party. But there have been embarrassing disasters. The sparkling drink Babydam has undergone three relaunches in five years without shaking off its "naff" image. In 1993 its Bambi-like logo was dropped from the bottles and a television advert featuring a macho man was introduced as part of a drive to make it trendy. But the attempt failed and the emblem was reintroduced earlier this year to try to reattract former drinkers.

— Amanda Kelly

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ER.

MINOLTA

Prosecution and defence prepare appeals. Is America turning against the au pair? Did the judge get it right?

THE FIGHT GOES ON

Louise Woodward yesterday enjoyed her first day as a free woman for nine months. But her freedom is not yet complete. As David Osborne explains, there remains a long and windy path ahead as both sides in the case launch their respective appeals.

Lest anyone gets carried away: the Woodward trial may be over, but the case is still open. This morning, both sides are expected to file their respective appeals to the Massachusetts state court and a new drama will be opened. It is a process that leaves Woodward in a kind of legal – and continental – limbo.

And it may not be over quickly. While the procedures of the state appeals court, based in downtown Boston, can on occasion be merciful, if this case joins the normal queue and is forced to wait its turn, both appeals are likely to take a year.

For Woodward and her family, this is depressing news. Unless negotiations are arranged between both sides to alter it, the decision of the court on Monday was that she will have to stay in Massachusetts throughout the appeal process with her passport confiscated from her. In that scenario, headlines that have Woodward home for Christmas are over-optimistic. Unless we are talking Christmas 1998.

While members of Woodward's defence team refused yesterday to speculate on their strategy, the prosecution camp was leaving no one in doubt of its determination to push at every appeals door that is open to it. "This is not a decided case," insisted Martha Coakley, the co-

prosecutor during the trial. As a first step, the prosecution is likely to demand a stay of the two dramatic decisions announced by Judge Zobel – the reduction of the verdict on Woodward from Murder Two to manslaughter and the passing of the minimal, time-served sentence. If it were to succeed, the stay would entail Woodward being sent straight back to the Framingham prison she has become so familiar with. Even prosecution sources admitted yesterday, however, that the tactic was a long-shot and almost doomed to failure.

Then there will be the prosecution's appeal proper. Of the outcome of Monday's events, Ms Coakley said that the sentence especially was "totally out of proportion, even with the judge's own finding that Louise killed this child".

The appeal, however, cannot be aimed at the sentence but only at the changing of the verdict. Here too, however, the prosecution lawyers face an uphill struggle, if only because it was they, at trial, that tried to force Judge Zobel to keep manslaughter as an option for the jury when it retired to consider Woodward's fate.

The defence, meanwhile, is expected to clarify its appeal approach either today or later this week. What seems certain is that it will attempt to overturn the manslaughter verdict and have Louise acquitted and her name cleared. This too, however, seems like a tall order.

There is also another option. In its motions to Judge Zobel post-trial, the defence asked for a re-trial on the grounds that the first trial was prejudiced on various counts, including by the late disclosure of important photographic evidence. It could appeal Judge Zobel's denial of a new trial. It is doubtful, however, whether the defence would be ready to go to a re-trial.



Two Bostonians reading a special edition of the Boston Globe following Woodward's reduction in sentence Photograph: Reuters

THE AMERICAN BACKLASH

A rumble of anger rolled across America yesterday as disbelief over the conviction of Louise Woodward was replaced by a sense of bewilderment that she was sentenced to just 279 days for manslaughter.

Support for the British au pair during her courtroom ordeal evaporated as Americans asked how a judge could find her guilty of killing a child one minute, and then free her the next.

The feeling was best expressed by Jay Leno, the American television presenter, who told his audience: "Looks like OJ's got a new golfing buddy."

A poll in the USA Today showed that 52 per cent of Americans agreed with Judge

Hiller Zobel's decision to reduce Woodward's sentence from murder to manslaughter. But 52 per cent also thought he was wrong to free her immediately.

Stephen Colwell, one of the trial jurors, said he was convinced Woodward had killed the baby. "I was not unhappy with the judge's ruling for some form of manslaughter, but to follow that up with nothing for a sentence seems unduly lenient to me," he said. "It's interesting that the time she has served is about as long as the baby was alive; I don't think that's appropriate."

Another juror, who did not wish to be named, said: "I don't think any of us thought she intentionally murdered

Matthew. But ... something happened to that baby and it happened when Louise was taking care of him."

Matthew Storn, editor of the Boston Globe, said sympathy had switched to Deborah and Sami Eappen. "The initial response after the verdict was predominantly sympathy to Louise Woodward ... But ... the negative opinion towards her has been growing."

Boston radio reporter Flo Jonic, who covered the case for WBZ radio, said: "People are largely disgusted with this ... Three to five years would have put some value on this baby's life. This girl now has the rest of her life to look forward to and Matthew is dead."

— David Osborne and Steve Boggan

WAS ZOBEL RIGHT?

There was some surprise but little criticism among lawyers of the nine-month sentence handed out to Louise Woodward. As Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, discovered, sentencing for manslaughter can vary enormously in both Britain and the United States.

While many lawyers, on both sides of the Atlantic, had been expecting a sentence of between two and five years for Louise Woodward, there was little feeling that Judge Zobel had gone "off the scale".

Bruce Holder QC agreed the sentence had been merciful; had the teenager been given several years, "no one would have been very surprised". But it was not out of line with expectations.

"The sentence was certainly at the merciful end of the scale, but not unduly lenient, not one that would be susceptible to a prosecution appeal in this country," he said. He also doubted whether the judge had been influenced by the media clamour surrounding the trial.

American lawyer Nadine Radford QC, a criminal defence barrister based in London, said the sentence was lenient, but believed the judge had been influenced not by the media pressure on him, but instead the pressure on Woodward. "She has been under a great deal of pressure at a young age. The judge probably factored that in."

Judges in Britain, as in the United States, have great discretion in what sentence they hand out for manslaughter cases. In Britain, sentences can vary from the lower scale of probation, or suspended prison sen-

tences for defendants – for example, where the accused has endured tremendous bullying – to a life sentence. In the US, the options are similar though in some states, such as Massachusetts, there can be a 15 or 20-year maximum.

Irwin Rochman, a defence lawyer and former prosecutor in New York, said there some "surprise" among legal colleagues at the level of Woodward's sentence. But he added: "For surprise do not read criticism. Most lawyers are sophisticated enough to know unless they have sat throughout the whole trial and heard all the evidence you do not have a feel for what the case is all about."

Judges were experienced, of a high standard and in a position to listen to all the facts and make decisions accordingly. "That's what they are paid to do."

Another British barrister, Jonathan Caplan QC, who has experience of the US system, said there was no such thing as a "normal" sentence for manslaughter. "In some cases a probation order will be appropriate, in another only a life sentence might fit the bill."

Lawyers agreed that the judge would have taken into account Louise Woodward's state of mind, her age, and the fact that, as Mr Rochman said, she was "a young girl far away from home".

Paul Cavadiuo, principal officer of the National Association of the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, agreed that in a similar case in this country such a sentence would have come as "no surprise". Last September, Julia Watts, 31, was given an 18-month suspended prison sentence at Manchester Crown Court after she killed her severely handicapped baby daughter by removing a breathing tube from her throat. She had been convicted of manslaughter.

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As the hunt progresses, fatty acids in the blood rise, indicating high physiological stress levels.

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Despite its name, stag hunting is not confined to the male of the species.

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A MORI poll taken in October 1997 shows that 73% of people support the Bill. We want to turn that overwhelming weight of public opinion into legislation.

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You can write to your MP direct at the House of Commons, or call the RSPCA on 01403 223284 (9-5 weekdays) and we'll send you a campaign pack.

And if you need further motivation, look again at the stag in the picture.

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therapies to help with
pregnancy and
childbirth. Some
Health Experts warn
of the risk of injury to
the baby if these
techniques are not
used properly.

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many different
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some are
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than others.
It is important
to choose a
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and to discuss
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Alternative therapies aid pregnant women

Midwives are turning to complementary therapies to help women in pregnancy and childbirth. Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor, looks at the trend to replace painkilling drugs with aromatherapy oils and massage.

The demand for natural childbirth is fuelling a growing interest in alternative remedies in maternity care for women who may be unable to use pharmaceutical drugs for fear of harming the baby.

Midwives are offering scented oils, massage and techniques such as reflexology (manipulation of the feet) to help women cope with problems in pregnancy and labour.

A survey of the use of complementary therapies in the National Health Service found that midwives were the most likely of all professional groups to have incorporated the techniques into their practice.

The survey, published yesterday by the NHS Confederation and conducted in Leicestershire, found examples of the use of the therapies in GP surgeries, health clinics, hospices and old people's homes. However, there was a lack of funds for the treatments and concerns about safety and effectiveness.

Denise Tiran, a midwife and lecturer in complementary therapy and midwifery at the University of Greenwich, said the demand for the therapies in maternity care was coming from the women. "Women want control. It is the one time in their lives when they are involved in a genuine partnership over their health care. They are taking a greater interest in their own health because it affects the health of their baby."

Aromatherapy and massage are the chief treatments in use because they are quickly learnt and easier to incorporate into midwifery practice. Some midwives offer homeopathy and a

few practise acupuncture. Ms Tiran, who practises reflexology in the maternity department of Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup, and who is chair of the Complementary Therapies in Midwifery Group, said: "What most of us are doing is symptom control - for things like morning sickness, heart burn, backache and constipation."

"These are problems the obstetrician would not see as an abnormality and it is the responsibility of the midwife to help women over them. So often the physiological disorders of pregnancy and childbirth cannot be treated with drugs."

"One of the major benefits is relieving stress. A lot of my time is spent talking to women. They feel here is someone who has got 20 to 30 minutes, who is knowledgeable about midwifery and who they can discuss things with."

There are dangers. Some oils can stimulate uterine contractions, raise or lower blood pressure or induce epileptic fits. Ms Tiran said: "There is a lot of controversy over lavender oil. It is extremely useful and versatile, but it may induce uterine bleeding. Raspberry leaf tea, a herbal remedy which can help tone the uterus, should also not be given until the last three months of pregnancy. It is not enough for midwives to use oils simply because they smell nice and are relaxing. They must know their effects and what the contraindications are."

There are an estimated 200 midwives in the complementary therapies group and many more are believed to be keen to use the techniques. Although nurses and physiotherapists are also interested in providing alternative remedies, midwives have more professional autonomy, work independently and have the scope to introduce them.

The NHS Confederation, which represents health authorities and trusts, has called for a government funded national programme to look at the effectiveness of complementary medicine and the training of practitioners.



Healing hands: A pregnant woman is given an abdominal massage by midwife Denise Tiran in the maternity department of Queen Mary's hospital in Sidcup yesterday. Ms Tiran said the demand for alternative therapies is coming from women, who are 'taking a greater interest in their own health because it affects the health of their baby' Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

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Cancer patients suffer shortage of specialists

Cancer patients are receiving inferior care because of a shortage of doctors and nurses skilled in the specialty. Jeremy Laurance says that the situation is likely to get worse.

Cancer is becoming more common, but specialist staff trained to treat it are not. Urgent action is needed to fill gaps in services and ensure that the care of cancer patients is not left to chance depending on where they live, a report warns today.

Studies show that less than half of cancer patients are referred to a cancer specialist and over a quarter are treated by consultants who have little experience in dealing with their condition. The shortage of skilled staff is likely to worsen because the number of people with cancer is forecast to rise by four per cent over the next decade.

The Cancer Collaboration study, produced jointly by the King's Fund, the Cancer Research Campaign and Macmillan Cancer Relief, says there is a shortage of more than 120 radiotherapists and more than 70 medical oncologists, as well as clinical nurse specialists.

Under the 1995 Calman proposals, a network of cancer units linked to specialist cancer centres was proposed

to ensure that all patients had access to high-quality treatment. To achieve the aim of creating 150 units and 40 centres, there will be further demands on staff.

An extra 500 medical students should be trained each year, 450 new consultant posts created and more nurses, surgeons, radiotherapists and GPs specialising in cancer should be appointed, it says.

Professor Gordon McVie, director general of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "It is very worrying that if someone in Britain develops a type of cancer such as bowel or lung, their chance of surviving the disease is worse than if they lived in the United States, Germany or France."

Christine Farrell, director of the King's Fund clinical change programme, said: "It seems inevitable that the required numbers of trained, experienced nurses and doctors will not be available in the short term unless the Department of Health can find some short-term and long-term solutions to the cancer workforce problems."

Professor George Alberti, president of the Royal College of Physicians, said it was not only cancer patients who were suffering from a shortage of specialists.

"We have a whole mountain range of medical conditions to treat, and only enough consultants to reach the foothills."

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Stalker convicted of harassment

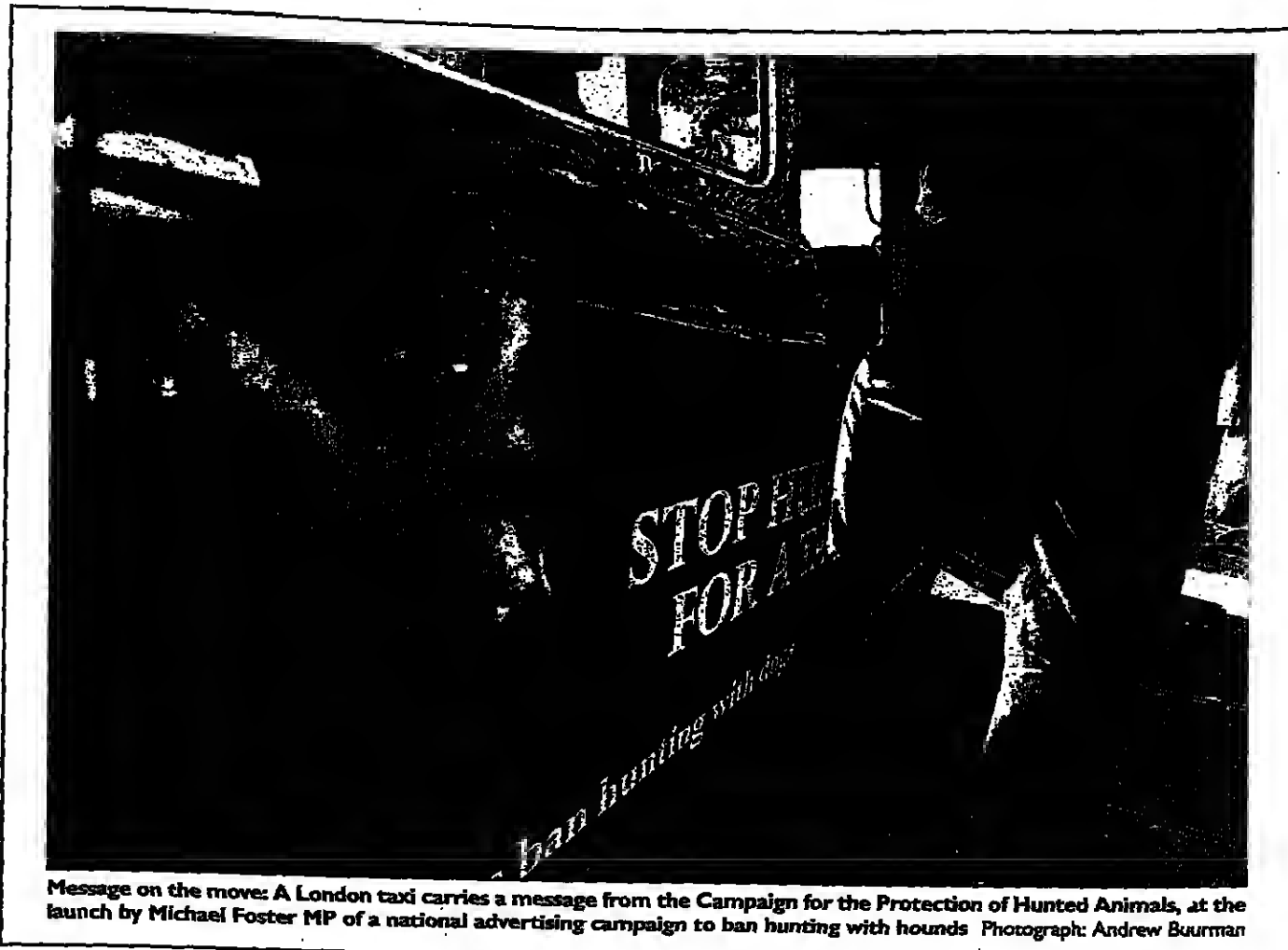
One of the first men to be charged under a new law protecting victims of stalking yesterday admitted following and harassing a married woman. Wayne Garratt, 29, from Redditch, Worcestershire, told police that he became besotted with Leona Sadler, 44, after seeing her walking through the streets of Stratford-upon-Avon.

He told officers that he was unable to pluck up the courage to talk to his victim and instead left a note on the windscreen of her car inviting her to meet him, writing: "I know what you're up to."

At Stratford magistrates' court Garratt, a married man, admitted a charge of harassing Mrs Sadler between 23 and 25 June this year, in a case brought under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 which came into force on 16 June. Sentencing was adjourned for reports.

Rhino out to grass

A rhinoceros called Dick is set to retire to Scotland at the age of 28 because he is too old to breed. Dick, who is currently housed at the West Midlands Safari Park in Bewdley, Worcestershire, is due to be transferred to Blair Drummond Safari Park near Stirling. Two other rhinos from Bewdley, 32-year-old Maggie and Alice, 28, have already been transported to Blair Drummond.



Message on the move: A London taxi carries a message from the Campaign for the Protection of Hunted Animals, at the launch by Michael Foster MP of a national advertising campaign to ban hunting with hounds. Photograph: Andrew Burman

British green label for eco-products

Britain may need to develop its own 'ecolabel' for environmentally friendly products and abandon the flawed European version, Michael Meacher, environment minister, said yesterday. The hope is that it will succeed in boosting greener consumption where Brussels has failed, writes our Environment Correspondent, Nicholas Schoon.

decide which brands qualified. The scheme is widely perceived as a failure. It has been slow to develop, few firms have put forward their products for the Euro-ecolabel and most countries in the union have their own ecolabelling schemes which have more authority and recognition than that of the EU. Only Portugal, Greece, Ireland and the UK lack national labels.

Until now, Britain has stuck firmly with the European version, which can be found only on a few brands of kitchen paper, a handful of washing machine models, one detergent and a clutch of paints and varnishes. Very few consumers recognise the labels.

"We've tried harder than any other country to make it work," environment minister Michael Meacher told a conference on ecolabels yesterday. Now the Government would consider setting up a British ecolabel, making a decision in the next few months. "We can't dilly dally any more."

This dismayed Ritt Bjerregaard, the EU's environment commissioner, who was also speaking at the conference. Afterwards, she said: "I was very surprised. I thought the new government was feeling more kindly towards European solutions, but this is in the opposite direction."

Five years ago, after exhaustive argument and much delay, the European Union's ecolabelling scheme was created. It was intended to bring reassurance and simplicity to "green minded" consumers who wished to buy products which did the least harm to the environment.

The plan was to have just one, trustworthy, label across the entire union. Companies which felt their products did the minimum of environmental damage in manufacture, use and disposal, were invited to apply for the label. A panel of experts, government-appointed, would set the "green" criteria for different types of products, then

DAILY POEM

Autumn Crocus

By Ruth Fainlight

Anomalous bright blossom
in late afternoon shadow.

Mercury-pale stems
surging out of the dark
earth: Halloween candles.

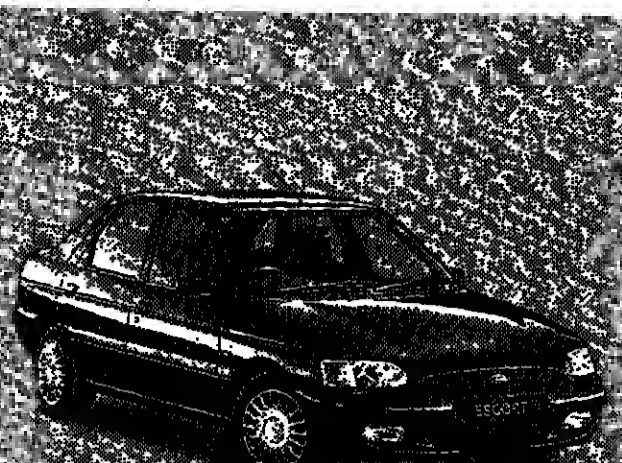
Mauve flowers with amber
yellow pollen-swollen anthers.

Each clump is bordered
by a halo of rotting
petals like votive objects
around a damaged ikon
or a martyr's statue.

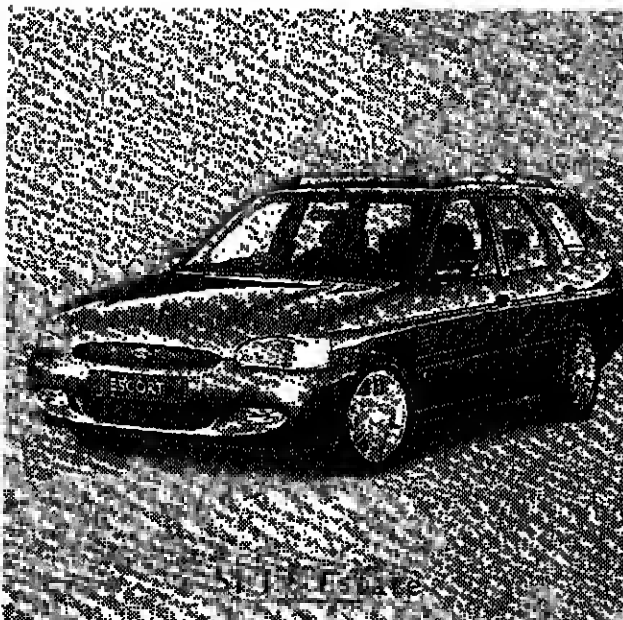
This poem comes from Ruth Fainlight's new collection, *Sugar-Paper Blue* (Bloodaxe, £6.95), whose long title poem combines memories of her New York childhood with echoes of Russian history and culture.



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Island's gay rights campaign runs into stormy waters



Sea change: Gays in Guernsey claim they live in an atmosphere of bigotry and hatred. Many on the island, including Peter Bougourd, right, would be horrified by any liberalisation of the existing laws

Photographs: David Rose

Gay rights have erupted on to the political agenda in Guernsey, where homosexuality is still an unpalatable subject and sex is illegal between men under 21. As Kathy Marks discovered, a proposal to reduce the age of consent is meeting vitriolic opposition on the island.

The young men seated around a table in Dix-Neuf, a stylish brasserie in St Peter Port, the Guernsey capital, appear the height of respectability. They are clean shaven and smartly dressed, fresh from their jobs in the finance industry. Some of them live at home with their parents. Their only brush with the law has been the occasional parking ticket.

Yet all of them, according to the local penal code, are criminals. They are gay men who have had sex before the age of 21. Across the water, in Great Britain, their actions would be legal. In the tiny Crown dependency where they grew up, they could be put behind bars.

Until recently, they resigned themselves to this peculiar anomaly. It was hard enough being different in a close-knit community with ultra-conservative social values, in a place where homosexuality was talked about only in whispers, where the gay population was fragmented and invisible.

Last month, after Labour promised a free vote on reducing the homosexual age of consent to 16, a vote that will have no impact on self-governing Guernsey, these men finally lost patience. They founded the island's first gay support group, Courage, and persuaded Carol Fletcher, a senior deputy in the States of Deliberation, the island's parliament, to take up their cause.

When Ms Fletcher announced that she planned to bring a private member's Bill to harmonise the age of consent law with the mainland, the reaction was instantaneous. Peter Bougourd, a fellow politician, went on BBC local radio to denounce homosexuals as "people who breed by contamination". During an angry exchange of letters in the *Guernsey Evening Press*, one correspondent wrote: "If I had my way, these people would be classed as third-rate citizens with no rights to social services, and struck off the electoral roll."

In a more sinister turn, liberal-minded politicians have been sent a venomously homophobic leaflet that lists in stomach-curdling detail the supposed sexual practices of gay men. These include, according to the leaflet - which was published by the Family Research Institute in Colorado Springs - the consumption of each other's bodily waste products.

Courage believes that such tactics can only help its campaign. Members are still anxious about being identified. One of the uglier consequences of their higher profile has been a spate of "queer-bashing". Gay men have been chased, harassed and

threatened. In one incident, a gang of youths trapped a man inside his car, smashed the windows and turned it over.

Jamie, 18, believes that the criminalisation of teenagers breeds bigotry. "I grew up feeling like a freak, totally isolated." For people like him, loneliness is compounded by the complete absence of gay bars or clubs. A pub on the harbour front recently offered an upstairs room one night a week. But gay couples would not dream of strolling along the cobbled lanes of St Peter Port hand in hand. "People would keel over," says Paul, 27.

It was only 10 years ago that sex between men was grudgingly legalised here, following a debate in which one politician warned that Guernsey would become famous as "the island where the pannies come out early".

Carol Fletcher, whose Bill will be debated in the New Year, hopes the climate has changed. She points to letters in the local press pleading for tolerance. "For me, this is a human rights issue," she says.

Fear and ignorance are fertile territory for Guernsey's numerous fundamentalist preachers, who have thundered from the pulpit about "unnatural practices" and issued dire warnings about the corruption of impressionable young men.

At his fishmongers in St Sampson, Mr Bougourd, an affable man, says he has been misunderstood. "People are making me out to be some kind of homophobe," he says. "I've got nothing against homosexuals; it's buggery that I can't stand."

Museums told to go commercial

The Labour Government wants national museums and galleries to take lessons from Harvey Nichols, the Knightsbridge store immortalised in the sitcom *Absolutely Fabulous*. David Lister hears the arts minister, Mark Fisher, tell astonished museum directors to become more commercial.

The Government yesterday signalled a U-turn on demanding free admission to national museums. A stunned conference of museum direc-

tors heard Mark Fisher, the arts minister, say he now had to consider the success of the National Galleries on Merseyside which has introduced charges with concessions for young people and had an increase in visitor numbers.

He added, to the consternation of his audience, that museums and galleries should make money by "exploiting retail space" and learning lessons "from Harvey Nichols, Marks and Spencer and Tesco. It is not cross commercialism to say we can do better in these areas," he said to some gasps from the audience.

Mr Fisher was addressing a conference organised by the Museums and Galleries Commission. He said afterwards that what he had in mind was

art galleries and museums opening shops at airports, both in Britain and in places like Dubai and Singapore.

A number of leading museum directors commented privately that his speech sounded like many they had heard from Conservative ministers during the last 18 years, and there was little further scope for maximising marketing and retail opportunities.

Significantly, Mr Fisher's speech was in stark contrast to his statement to the House of Commons in the summer when he spoke out against charging, saying: "We do not want anyone to be charged entry to national museums and galleries... The Government believes that all members of the community should be able

to enjoy our great national museums and galleries: they should be for the many, not just the few."

David Barrie, director of the National Art Collections Fund, said: "Despite its earlier promises, it now looks as if the government has performed a U-turn. Mark Fisher's speech strongly suggests that they have no intention of discouraging the introduction of admission charges."

However, Alan Borg, director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which does charge, said: "Every survey shows the majority of museum visitors comes from the ABC1 social category and tourists. To give them free admission amounts to a subsidy for the middle classes and well-off."

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Revealed: the sweet smell of girls' success at exams

Success in exams may be something to be sniffed at after all.

Psychologists have discovered that smell-association is a powerful aid to memory for students, particularly among those who are anxious or apprehensive.

The researchers found that students exposed to various unusual background smells while trying to absorb large chunks of text or data, were able to remember much more when exposed to the same smell at the time of recall. When compared to the performance of students who had not been exposed to such smells, the volunteers were able to recall almost 20 per cent more of the text they had tried to remember.

The research of Dr Rachel Herz, reported in *The Psychologist* this week, opens up a whole new area of opportunity for students. The aromas of peppermint, violet leaf and pine were used in the experiment, but Dr Herz of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia

says that smell-association will only work as a memory aid if the odour is either unusual, like a new perfume, or out of context, like chocolate in a laboratory.

"Sure it will work, but only if it is new and unusual. Go to a perfume department, pick out something you have never smelled before, put it on the desk while you are studying for your test, and then bring it in with you a few days later when you are doing the test and it will work," she said.

In a series of studies, Dr Herz set up experiments in which words were read or recalled in the presence or absence of a smell. "The subjects were taken to a room with an ambient odour and they learnt a series of words. They were then brought back to another room a few days or a week later and some were exposed to the same odour and some not. What we found was that memory is significantly affected by the specific odour," she said.

— Roger Dobson



Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Grade A scents: Scientists say that smell-association may help students recall more facts in the exam hall

Are homeless people worth just 2 minutes of your time?

THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS families in the UK has almost doubled in the last fifteen years. Shelter thinks much more decisive action is needed.

Providing decent housing for homeless people makes economic sense in the long term. The savings on health care costs alone would make it economically worthwhile. And what price do you put on ruined lives? The children, for instance, who may never know a real home...

It's not about politics, it's about getting homeless people decent homes, and off the streets. But to tackle Britain's housing crisis effectively we have to keep in touch with public opinion.

Please spend just two minutes of your time completing this survey, and return it as soon as you can.

If you can also make a donation of £15 (or whatever you can afford) we would be very grateful. Please let us have your answers within 14 days.

Thank you.



1997 Shelter National Opinion Survey on Homelessness

Please help us make this the widest ever survey of attitudes to homelessness. Your contribution will be much appreciated, and your answers treated in the strictest confidence. Please complete and return within 14 days.

PLEASE RETURN WITHIN 14 DAYS

Q1. Are you aged:

18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐
45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75+ ☐

Q2. Do you:

own your own home or have a mortgage? ☐
rent privately? ☐
rent from a Housing Association or local authority? ☐
live in someone else's home? ☐
other ☐

Q3. Do you share your home with:

children? Yes ☐ No ☐
partner/husband/wife or anyone else related to you? Yes ☐ No ☐
Someone not related to you? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q4. Have you ever been homeless or at serious risk of losing your home yourself (through a tenancy ending, not being able to afford the rent or mortgage, break up of relationship, or other reason)? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q5. Do you know anyone else who is either homeless or at serious risk of losing their home in such a way?

At risk of homelessness Yes ☐ No ☐
Actually homeless Yes ☐ No ☐

Q6. Bad housing can have serious long-term consequences. Please show how important you view these problems (tick one box only for each problem; 1 being the most important):

Children doing badly at school ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐
People suffering asthma, bronchitis and other serious diseases ☐ ☐ ☐
People becoming more dependent on social services ☐ ☐ ☐

Q7. Do you think politicians are at present sufficiently concerned about the plight of homeless people? Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Q8. Would you be willing to write a letter to an MP which might help to get homeless people housed? Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Q9. Would you be willing to make a donation to Shelter to help homeless people? Yes ☐ No ☐

Name: (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)
Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Thank you for your time. If you would like to make a donation, please complete the section below. We suggest £15, but any amount you can give will be greatly appreciated.

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Expiry date ☐ ☐ 97/1/42

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Labour fails to defuse 2000 'bomb'

Ministers have admitted they are hopelessly behind schedule in preparing for the millennium computer bug. Fran Abrams reveals that the first official estimates say the 2000 timebomb will cost the Government £1bn.

estimated it needed to spend £30m, but now it says it will need £45.6m. It is believed the problem will cost the NHS about £210m and the Ministry of Defence £250m.

The private sector is way ahead in its response to the bug. BT will spend £300m and the four main clearing banks expect to spend £500m.

According to Robin Guenier, head of the Taskforce 2000 group set up to tackle the problem, a similar spend by the Government would amount to £7bn. Even if it wanted to spend that amount it could not do so, though, because the skilled labour would not be available. Figures of between £3bn and £4bn are believed to be more realistic.

"This emphasises the need for senior people to start a process of radical prioritisation," Mr Guenier said.

Mr Bruce is pressing David Clark, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, for an early statement on the issue.

"There is clearly still too much complacency in Whitehall and it really is time for some action before it simply is too late to sort things out," he said.

Yesterday, one of the leading experts on the problem, Maurice Fitzpatrick of Chantrey Vellacott accountants, said the Government had failed to grasp its magnitude.

"In many ways this is the biggest single issue that the Labour government faces in its first term, although whether they are properly aware of that at the moment is hard to say," he said.

Mr Clark has said he cannot comment on details before his statement. However, a spokeswoman said the cost could be met from existing budgets and that the £7bn figure was too high.

Mobile phones play games with sanity

As if the mobile phone was not a sufficiently irritating fact of modern life, a telecoms company has linked the much-reviled device with another 1990s pariah - the computer game.

The latest executive toy, on sale in January, will have three games built in, allowing the user to annoy neighbouring commuters with over-loud, single-ended conversation before infuriating them with incessant twitching and bleeping.

The new phone, from the Finnish company Nokia, offers a game called "Snake", in which the phone's keypad is used to direct the snake to eat on-screen "food". "Memory", an updated version of the children's Palmanism pairs game; and "Logic", which is similar to the Mastermind board game.

The games capability of the new phone highlights the increasing sophistication of modern mobiles. Electronic "business cards" can be exchanged in seconds using the

phone's infrared connector, and telephone lists can be printed out directly on the increasing number of infrared enabled printers. The infrared connector can also be used to link the phone to a PC.

The processing power in the phone also allows for some clever telephone tricks. It can ignore selected calls by recognising and screening out incoming telephone numbers.

It also allows the user to divert all calls to an answerphone service and accept only calls coming from, for example, the managing director's phone number.

Of course, if the boss is calling from a different phone, that would be blocked out as well. But the potential for screening out previous partners and annoying salespeople should prove useful.

Oh, and by the way, the phone is quite good for making telephone calls.

— Steve Horner

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Railtrack urges staff to snoop on train crews

Railtrack is asking its employees to snoop on train crews to make sure it is not being unfairly blamed for delays.

The infrastructure company believes that some drivers and conductors – possibly with the surreptitious encouragement of train operating companies – are taking the organisation's name in vain.

Railtrack managers believe that train crews routinely use excuses like "signal failure" – which would be down to Railtrack – when in some cases the delay was caused by defective rolling stock, ostensibly the responsibility of train operating companies.

In a newsletter covering the southern area, Railtrack suggests that employees using trains monitor what passengers are told, keep "correct records" of what happened and report the information as soon as possible.

In its advice to employees, Railtrack says: "When you experience a delay on your train, we would like to know. This is especially so with incidents which start as minor delays, stopping unusually between stations, or delays in platforms. Please let us know what you yourself see delaying a train, or reasons the conductors give for the delays."

Railtrack insists that it will always put its hand up when culpable, but has devised a series of euphemisms for the difficulties it encounters (it now prefers "adhesion problems" to the more risible "leaves on the line").

The RMT rail union is angry over Railtrack's plea to its employees and it argues that the company itself is

capable of misleading passengers.

Lawrie Harries, an RMT official, pointed out that the privatised railway system is operated on the basis of contracts which include compensation and penalty clauses for delays. "Delays caused by Railtrack cost it money. It is not unknown for passengers to be told that delays are caused by bad weather when the truth is the condition of the track or signalling."

He added that most delays are caused by track or signalling problems which are Railtrack's responsibility. Train operating companies can also attempt to pass off rolling stock failures on maintenance staff or rolling stock leasing companies.

Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the union, said Railtrack's initiative was another example of a changing railway culture. "Privatisation has meant that we have moved from running the railways by team effort to disjointed individual effort where the overall objective is sometimes forgotten," he said.

"If Railtrack and the train operating companies put the same effort and ingenuity into providing an efficient, integrated service as they do in passing the buck, passengers would get the high-quality service they are entitled to expect."

Railtrack said there was nothing "mischievous or sinister" about its request to employees. "It is simply a way of keeping in touch with what's happening on the ground. People are anxious that they get the right information. If it's our fault we will admit it."

— **Bonnie Clement,**
Labour Editor



Treading on shaky ground: Although described by Lee as 'light-hearted', this image still attracted complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority

Girl Power: Has it simply gone too far?

The rise of female empowerment is reflected in adverts that show women inflicting pain on men, and the Advertising Standards Authority is worried that it may represent a trend. **Paul McCann,** Media Correspondent, asks if 'Girl Power' has gone too far.

The advertising industry's watchdog has warned agencies against a trend for so-called "Girl Power" advertisements that show women being violent towards men.

The Advertising Standards Authority issued a warning in its latest monthly bulletin after three advertisements that

showed women causing men harm attracted complaints from the public.

A campaign for Lee jeans showed a woman's stiletto-heeled boot pushing on the buttocks of a prostrate naked man under the words "Put the boot in".

It was Lee Jeans who alerted the ASA to the 'Girl Power' trend in its defence of the 'Put the boot in' campaign. Lee told the ASA that the advertisement was acceptable because it reflected a prevailing mood of control and power for women in Britain – and because it was light-hearted.

In another example Nissan, the Japanese car manufacturer, and its advertising agency TBWA Simons Palmer, worried some members of the public with an advert under the strapline "Ask before you borrow it" which showed a man in pain

clutching his crotch after being assaulted by his girlfriend.

In another advertisement that attracted complaints men were seen getting into fatal accidents because they had been distracted by women dressed in Walfis clothes.

One execution, as they say in advertising, showed an Underground train guard about to be decapitated by a tunnel wall while ogling a woman. The slogan on the ad was "Dressed to kill".

The ASA says it received complaints that the advertisements were offensive, sexist, sadistic and likely to condone violence. In the case of the car and jeans adverts the complainants raised the point that the ads would not have been acceptable if they had portrayed such violence against women.

While the ASA rejected the complaints

because it did not believe they were likely to cause "serious or widespread" offence, the watchdog is worried enough to ask advertising agencies planning to use such imagery to call its copy clearance centre first.

"We are not putting out a blanket ban on 'Girl Power' ads," said a spokesman for the ASA. "But we would like to consider on an individual basis the copy of anything that is risqué towards men or portrays abuse against them ... it may be that violence against men by women as less of a social problem than men abusing women is something that the public worries less about."

"The complaints we've had serve as a reminder that suggestions of violence in advertisements tend not to find favour with the public, whatever the victim's gender and however humorous the intention."

Peers rally to defend Oxbridge against ministers' £35m funding review

Members of the House of Lords will today rally to the defence of Oxbridge against a government review of the fees which support their colleges.

Conservative peers say they are expecting support from Liberal Democrats and possibly Labour peers in a debate

which aims to highlight the threat to an Oxbridge approach to teaching which has endured for 700 years.

Baroness Blatch said yesterday that the attack was part of "the mean politics of envy" characteristic of the Government. She spoke of strong ru-

mours of a personal vendetta by Baroness Blackstone, the higher education minister.

She said: "We know people who have been to see Tony Blair about this. We know that there is a division between the Department for Education and Downing Street."

The department dismissed the idea of a vendetta as "ludicrous".

Ministers are examining the £19m paid to Oxford and the £16m to Cambridge in college fees each year at the suggestion of the Dearing review of higher education which reported in

July. The fees help fund tutors and college libraries.

Last week, the Higher Education Funding Council agreed a series of options as its advice to ministers on Oxbridge fees. One option might be to pay all or part of the fees to the two universities rather than to

individual colleges.

Lady Young, chairman of the association of Conservative peers, said: "The expenditure is a drop in the ocean but to Oxford and Cambridge it is vital, especially for the poorer colleges. If this money goes, my old college, St Anne's, would lose

three-quarters of a million a year." Options for Oxbridge included charging top-up fees

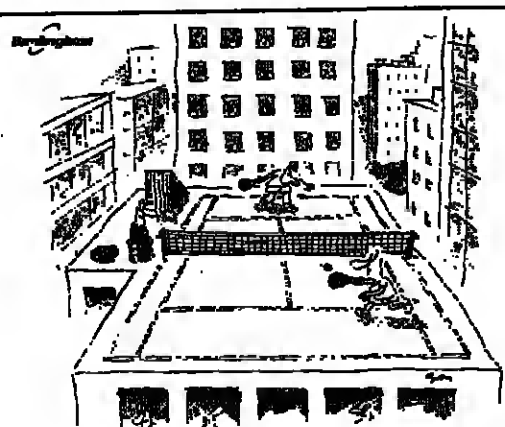
and taking only rich students, or the end of the tutorial system and job losses, she said.

Lord Beloff, a Tory peer and former Oxford don, said: "The fact that not every university can

operate this system does not make it less valuable."

A spokeswoman for the department said: "Ministers ... will look at what the funding council have to say and announce their findings."

— **Judith Judd,**
Education Editor



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Blair advised against an appearance on Labour's by-election campaign trail

Tony Blair is 'unlikely' to go to Beckenham to support Labour's by-election campaign. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says the Liberal Democrats are claiming it is a signal that Labour doubts that it can win.

Tony Blair broke with tradition by becoming the first Prime Minister for decades to campaign in the Uxbridge by-election, but party sources said yesterday that he was "unlikely" to repeat it in the by-election at Beckenham.

William Hague, the Tory leader, made a brief appearance at a grant-maintained girls' school in the constituency yesterday and Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, is

due to arrive on Monday. The Liberal Democrats claimed the Prime Minister's reluctance to go to Beckenham was a sign that Labour doubts it can win.

"If he doesn't come here, it just shows they are afraid of being beaten. He may have learnt his lesson from Uxbridge. He may have felt damaged by that," said Edward Davey, the MP and "minder" for the Liberal Democrat candidate in the by-election, 25-year-old Rosemary Vetterlein.

Mr Blair was warned that he was fashioning a rod for his own back by going to Uxbridge, which the Tories held, and it could be a handy weapon with which to beat the Government if he showed up in the leafy Tory suburbs in south London now.

The by-election, set for 20 November, was caused by the resignation of Piers Merchant, the Tory MP, after he was caught on video under a "moving

duvet" with a Soho club hostess who was also a Tory supporter. But sleaze could backfire for Labour while controversy is raging over Labour Party funding from the chiefs of Formula One motor racing.

On paper, Beckenham is the sort of rock-solid Tory seat that Labour could not dream of winning before 1 May. Bob Flaherty, who stood for Labour in the general election, enjoyed a swing from the Tories of 15 per cent, but still failed to win the seat.

He shrugged off the Tory winning margin of 4,953 but admitted that he is encouraging tactical voting by Liberal Democrat supporters, whose votes

Jacquie Lait, the Tory candidate, held a two-minute silence under a Spanish Oak tree with 11 supporters during canvassing yesterday. They may have been privately praying for the Liberal Democrat vote to hold up.



On the hustings: Lib Dem candidate Rosemary Vetterlein (right) canvassing in Beckenham yesterday with Hilary Gaster. Photograph: Peter Macdarmid

Low-earner tax scheme under attack

The Chancellor's plan to replace Family Credit, the top-up benefit for low earners, with a special tax allowance for the low paid, has run into fierce opposition within the Treasury. Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, reveals that officials are only too aware of the difficulties of the scheme. Gordon Brown and his adviser, Ed Balls, want to introduce,

Martin Taylor, the Barclays Bank chief executive, who heads the Government's tax and benefits task force, is said by experts who have discussed it with him to believe that there is not much to be gained from abolishing Family Credit in favour of a tax relief.

The row within the Treasury has been rumbling for some weeks, as officials draw up the consultative papers which will be published with Mr Brown's "Green Budget" later this month. Reform of the tax and benefit system will be a major focus of the statement.

In his July Budget, the Chancellor sent a clear signal that he favoured replacing the existing in-work benefit with a tax allowance that tapers off as income rises. It would draw upon the successful experience of the American Earned Income Tax Credit which helps 19

But many experts believe the disadvantages would outweigh the benefits. Pamela Meadows, director of the Policy Studies Institute, said: "The consensus is that there would be great difficulties in switching. The case for a tax credit in-

stead of a benefit like Family Credit has not been made."

Her view is in line with a majority of the evidence given to the Social Security Select Committee in its recent hearings.

The proposed tax allowance would reduce the tax paid on every extra pound earned by people on low incomes by withdrawing the allowance gradually. This would contrast with the poverty trap that exists for those whose income rises just enough to disqualify them entirely for Family Credit.

However, it has a number of disadvantages. The main one, over which the Conservative scheme was blocked in the House of Lords, was the administrative burden it would place on employers. In addition, employers would gain a lot of additional information about the financial and family circumstances of their employees.

Furthermore, Family Credit is mainly paid to women, whereas men would be the main recipient of a tax allowance. A tax credit scheme would also require joint taxation of couples, rather than independent taxation, because it would be calculated on a household rather than an individual basis. Many people in the Labour Party campaigned against the scheme in 1985 on precisely these gender grounds.

Research carried out for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also indicated that the American Earned Income Tax Credit has drawbacks in practice. Not the least of these is that it is thought to be very prone to fraudulent claims.

However, officials say the Chancellor and Mr Balls are absolutely determined to press ahead. One said: "They want a big idea on tax and benefits, and this is the one they want."

Ex-MP 'crushed' by party

Proposals to break up the Hendon North Conservative Association are directly related to a Commons revolt that embarrassed the Government before the election, Sir John Gorst, the former MP, protested yesterday.

The National Union of the Conservative Party decided last week that it was "minded" to expel the association following allegations of irregularities relating to membership, nomination of candidates, the appointment of an agent, and the retrospective use of £19,000 from the party's property fund.

But Sir John, who embarrassed the last Government by voting against it in protest over broken promises relating to a local hospital, told *The Independent*: "If you can't muzzle and regiment an MP, then your only alternative is to undermine his constituency support, because you can crush him by undermining his power base."

Complaints against the management of the local party were brought to a head in October, after it expelled two women parliamentary candidates.

— Anthony Bevins

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13/POLITICS

Ecclestone revelations put parties on a collision course

Party political funding began to unravel last night after it was revealed that Formula One's Bernie Ecclestone gave £1m to Labour, and £10m plus a £4m loan to the Tories. Anthony Bevis and Kim Sengupta report on an issue at the heart of democracy.

The full consequences of the decision of Sir Patrick Neil, Chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, to force the return of Labour's £1m, were slowly sinking in at Westminster last night.

Not only could it reinforce an expected cap on election spending for all parties, but it could also lead to the exposure of controversial Conservative funding.

The Prime Minister's Office suggested that if Mr Ecclestone's donation was to be returned because of the decision on tobacco sponsorship of Formula One racing, Conservative government decisions, and related funding, would also require examination.

A spokesman said: "The logical conclusion is that you now have to trawl through every government policy in the past and the future. And that applies to the last Conservative government as well."

Giving a further illustration of the logical consequences of Sir Patrick's ruling, the No 10 spokesman said that trade union funding of the Labour Party might be brought into question if the Government decided on a higher-than-expected minimum wage for low-paid employees, represented by unions like Unison.

One immediate result of the ruling is that the expected legislation on party funding – separate from Sir Patrick's longer-term inquiry into the question – is to be accelerated. That Bill, currently be-



Share of the cake: Bernie Ecclestone celebrating Michael Schumacher's 100th Grand Prix with Ferrari team-mate Eddie Irvine, left, and team boss Luca Di Montezemolo. Photograph: Allsport

ing drafted by the Home Office, includes the registration of political parties, the identification of people who donate more than £5,000 to parties, and a ban on foreign funding.

But Sir Patrick's intervention could also

force the parties to declare the amounts paid by donors. As Labour's proposals stand, Mr Ecclestone's £1m donation would be included in a group of those making donations of more than £5,000 – giving no clue as to the scale of the gift.

As for state funding of the parties, William Hague, the Tory leader, said he did not favour it, adding: "I do not think that the taxpayer should pay for political parties. They should have their own campaigns." The Downing Street spokesman

said Mr Blair also was not persuaded that it would be right.

"One of the reasons he is not persuaded," he said, "is the taxpayer might legitimately think, why should we be paying for politicians to tear lumps off each other

at election time? The public don't like either of these things. They don't like it that we have to go out and get this money, likewise they are not going to be terribly keen on funding political parties."

Paddy Ashdown, who said earlier that he had rejected the offer of a £1m donation before the last election – thought to have been offered by Mohamed Al Fayed – said last night that there might have to be a core of state funding but that the bulk of party money should come from private donations, which should all be itemised and identified in full.

Professor Anthony King, a member of Sir Patrick's committee, said that in his foreword to the Ministerial Code of Conduct, that the Prime Minister had said ministers should not accept gifts, hospitality or other services which might, or which might seem to, put them under an obligation.

"If that goes for individual ministers it might go for political parties... Mere disclosure of names of the people who give donations is not going to prove adequate."

Mr Ecclestone – the man in the immediate firing line – said he would put the returned £1m in the bank. A Labour spokesman said the party would have no difficulty in returning the cash, suggesting that Labour had enough of an overdraft facility to hack the cheque.

Briefly interviewed on BBC Radio 4's *World at One*, Mr Ecclestone said his donation had nothing to do with tobacco advertising. "This was well before anybody started talking about tobacco advertising," he said.

TORY MINISTER WHO TOOK ON THE TOBACCO GIANTS AND LOST

It was somehow fitting that on her retirement, Lady Thatcher should become a consultant for Philip Morris at around £550,000 a year. She was, after all, carrying on the tradition of Conservative Party's long and lucrative links with the tobacco industry.

The tobacco lobby and the sporting bodies it sponsors have always had influential friends at Central Office, and

Tory politicians, even ministers, who cross them did not survive for long. *The Independent* can tell the story of how one minister, Richard Tracey, was forced out when he tried to take on these vested interests.

In 1985, Mr Tracey, the member for Surbiton and, at 41, a rising young star of the party, was made minister of sport by Margaret Thatcher. He was soon being told by various

bodies and individuals, including television producers, that the tobacco companies were bending the rules in the televised sports they sponsored especially snooker and motor racing.

In snooker, BBC producers complained, the tobacco company sponsoring events had even started painting the sets in the colour of a cigarette brand. Mr Tracey instructed his

civil servants to try and negotiate voluntary restrictions with the tobacco industry. Warnings soon followed; he was told the industry had "powerful supporters at court". He was also presented with the scenario of the sports abandoning Britain with consequent job losses, just as the Labour government is now facing over Formula One.

However, Mr Tracey pur-

sued the reforms. He was told again, by some senior Tories, that he was doing his career no good.

The beginning of the end came, said a senior Tory source, when the party was made an offer during the 1987 election campaign that they could not refuse. Just a week before polling day, the fortunes of Neil Kinnock and Labour suddenly seemed to rise. There

was panic at Central Office at what became known as "Wobbling Thursday".

A last-minute advertising blitz was planned by the campaign organisers. However, the cost looked and proved prohibitive. Tory sources have revealed that a senior figure representing the tobacco industry then stepped in and offered assistance amounting to around £2m. In return asking for the

head of Mr Tracey. It is claimed the tobacco lobby offered to make available not just cash, but billboards, sites, and newspaper advertising space.

After the election triumph, Mr Tracey was expected to be promoted. He was acknowledged to have carried out his main task well – combating football hooliganism after the

Heysel disaster. Instead, he was demoted to the back benches.

Mr Tracey said yesterday: "When Margaret told me she wanted me to relinquish my position, I was shocked and disappointed. Of course I have often wondered whether my opposition to the tobacco lobby played a part."

"Others who have stood up to the tobacco lobby have suffered." — Kim Sengupta

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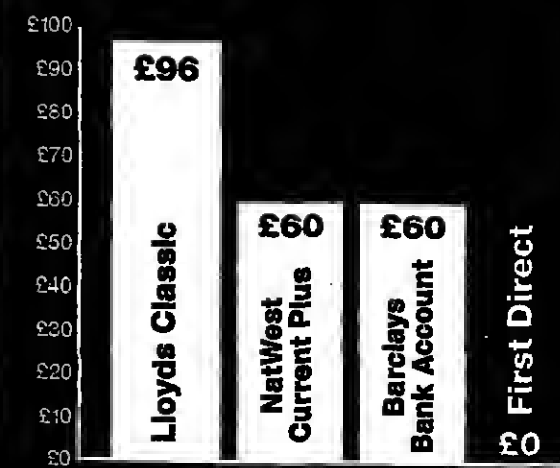
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15/THE UNABOMBER

Trial to look inside mind of America's most wanted man

The trial of the Montana hermit identified as the Unabomber opens today. The argument will not turn on whether he is guilty of conducting a 17-year bombing campaign, but on whether he is mentally ill.

BY TIM CORNWELL

"To get our message before the public with some chance of making a lasting impression, we've had to kill people."

So wrote the Unabomber in his 35,000-word manifesto, in which he advocated revolution against the industrial system and claimed to be part of a shadowy group called "FC". FC, or Freedom Club, as the FBI claims the letters stood for, was stamped in metal on parts of some of the 16 bombs dispatched by the Unabomber.

But FC never existed, it is alleged, except in the writings of 55-year-old Theodore Kaczynski, a former Berkeley maths professor who goes on trial in Sacramento today. Mr Kaczynski is charged with the murders of computer scientist and a University of California geneticist.

Prosecutors say they will also tie him to 12 other bombings that made the Unabomber the subject of the FBI's longest manhunt and accorded him near-legendary status in the annals of US crime. He is also accused of nearly downing a passenger jet.

The American media has afforded Mr Kaczynski not the merest glimmer of doubt. The

trial is expected to turn largely on the question of whether his lawyers, backed by his family, can persuade jurors to spare him the death penalty. Prosecutors say Mr Kaczynski is condemned by his own words. A hand-written autobiography, journals and a numeric code, which "together contain admissions of inculpatory statements to each of the 16 bombing incidents", were found in his Montana cabin.



Kaczynski: His lawyers admit he confessed to bombings

His attorneys admit they are his. Just as Mr Kaczynski meticulously hand-crafted his lethal parcels, so he carefully recorded the results. They prove that from as early as 1966, the chronically shy Mr Kaczynski, a young prodigy who dropped out of a promising academic career, formed a "desire to kill", the government says.

"Experiment 97. 11 December 1985. I planted bomb disguised to look like scrap of lumber behind Rentech Com-

pute Store in Sacramento." This was the entry marking Mr Murray's death. "According to San Francisco Examiner, Dec 20, the 'operator' (owner? manager?) of the store was killed, 'blown to bits'."

In 1981 a bomb was discovered and defused at the University of Utah. "I attempted a bombing and spent nearly 300 bucks just for travel expenses, motel, clothing for disguise, etc.", the journals read. "The thing failed to explode. Damn."

In November 1979 an incendiary bomb exploded in the hold of an American Airlines jet en route to Washington, forcing an emergency landing.

"In some of my notes I mentioned a plan for revenge on society," Mr Kaczynski wrote a month later. "Plan was to blow up one airliner in flight. Late summer and early autumn I constructed device."

The friendless Mr Kaczynski lived in Montana in a tiny shack for 20 years, honing his arguments that industrial technology was the bane of humankind.

In 1995, his manifesto was published by American newspapers in return for a promised end to his bombing campaign. It led his suspicious younger brother, David Kaczynski, to turn him in. Agents also recovered a handwritten draft of the manifesto and a carbon copy of the type-written version sent to the *New York Times*.

With jury selection expected to last up to a month, David Kaczynski leads those pleading for mercy, arguing that though his brother had an IQ of 170, he was disturbed. The defence are expected to argue that Mr Kaczynski, if not insane, is worthy of compassion. But he has not helped himself by refusing to be examined by government psychiatrists.



Big country: FBI agents in body armour keep their distance during the Freeman siege in Montana last year

Photograph: AP

Montana's vast badlands make a state fit for misfits

If there was ever a natural habitat for Theodore Kaczynski, it was the state of Montana, a vast, empty sanctuary for misfits, misanthropes and fugitive scoundrels from almost the very birth of the United States of America.

For one thing, everyone minds their business - and who wouldn't in a place three times the size of England, where the nearest neighbour to snoop on might be 50 miles? Montana is where you do your own thing.

Alone of US states, it abolished all speed limits (though that was not of much interest to Mr Kaczynski whose preferred method of travel from

his shack in the woods to pick up the mail and groceries in town was an ancient bike).

In Montana you can drive at 80mph down razor straight B-roads slicing across the high plains, and not see a soul. Only a scattering of seedy, faded towns with names like Paradise breaks the monotony.

For dropouts, recluses and misfits like Mr Kaczynski, paradise is what Montana was. From the earliest days of the West, men on the run were attracted to its hills, forests and ranges, and its proximity to Canada. A hundred years later, Vietnam draft-dodgers gravitated there for the same reason.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid chilled out in Montana for a while. More recently the selection of residents has become even more bizarre, not just eccentrics and an alleged criminal genius like Mr Kaczynski, but far-right millionaires convinced that just across that Canadian border black-clad troops in helicopters were massing about to take over the US in the name of the United Nations.

Then there were the Freemen. They holed themselves up with a small arsenal of weapons in a ranch at the opposite end of the state, around the same time as the Unabomber was caught.

So idiosyncratic were the Freemen that even the Militia of Montana regarded them as seriously unhinged. They threatened to hang the local sheriff, issued their own currency and finally "seceded" from the "Satan" of the United States before giving themselves up. Not surprisingly, bumper stickers began to appear around Montana, proclaiming "At Least Our Cows Aren't Mad."

Maybe the climate has something to do with this proliferation of the bizarre. Montana may have lately turned wacky, but it has always been a hard place to live. Farming is mainly a drought-plagued

hardscrabble affair. The plains are blazing hot in summer, but icy cold in winter, scoured by mighty blizzards sweeping out of the Rockies.

But suburbanisation and Western chic are an even greater threat to the land where the buffaloes and cowboys roamed. Today, cities like Billings and Missoula are strip mall-strewn specimens of anywhere USA. Out on the range, media glitterati such as Ted Turner and NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw have ranches. However much true Montanans detest it, the Big Sky Country is becoming the Big Dude Country.

— Rupert Cornwell



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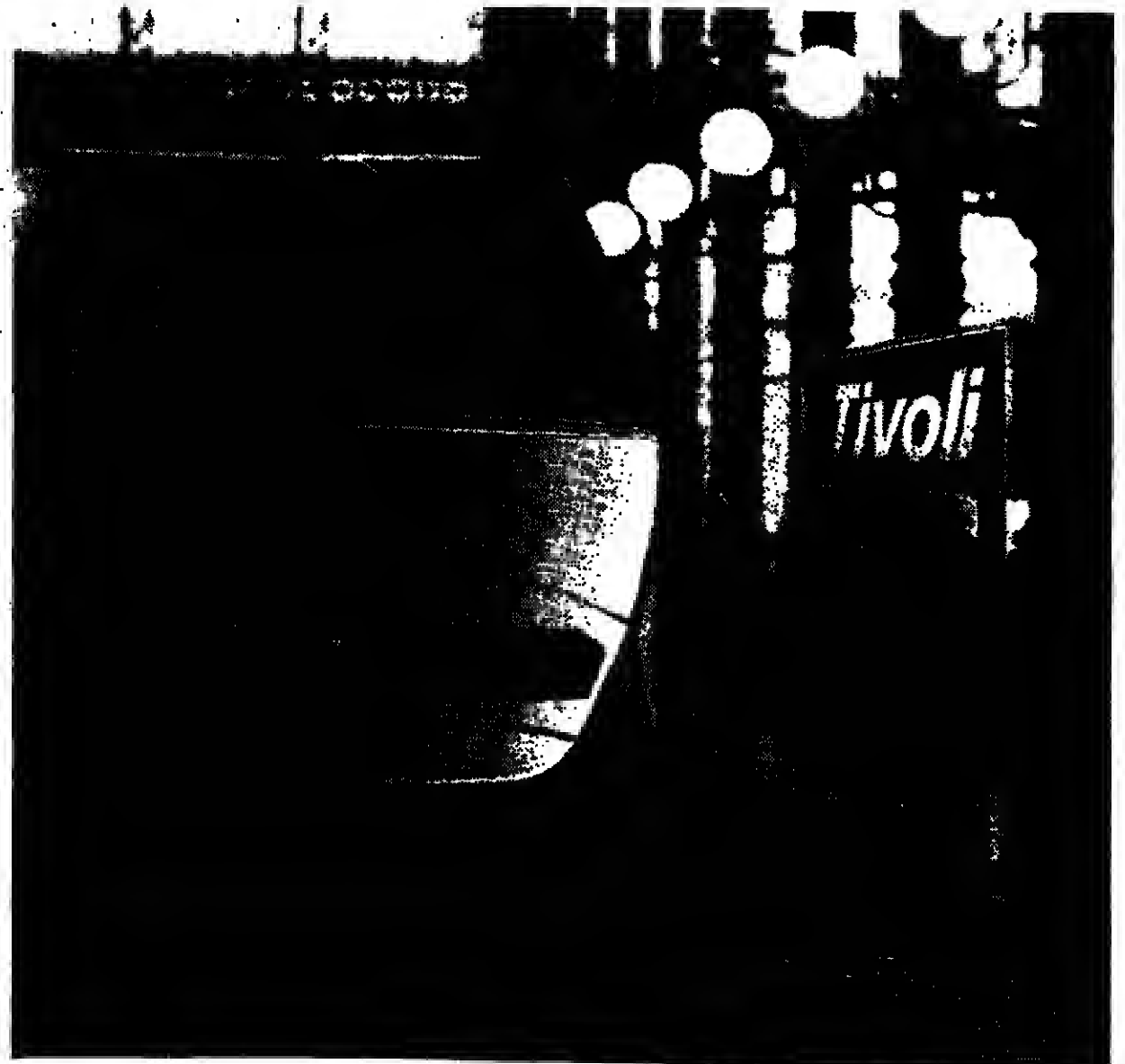
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First train to Serbia keeps Balkan peace on track

The first trains in six years started rolling between Serbia and Croatia yesterday. Marcus Tanner says this marks a milestone in the slow reconciliation between the two former Yugoslav republics that went to war in 1991.

In the days of Josip Tito, Yugoslavia's Communist leader for 35 years, the Belgrade-Zagreb railway was one of the busiest lines in Europe.

Built under the Habsburg dynasty to bind their sprawling and restless Slav domains with Budapest and the great imperial metropolis of Vienna, the railway under Tito evolved into one of the great thoroughfares of the continent, ferrying travellers between the old Yugoslav (and Serbian) capital of Belgrade to the Croatian capital, Zagreb, in luxury express trains in less than four hours, as well as transporting passengers from Italy and Germany and northern Europe towards Greece, Turkey and beyond.

When the line closed in the summer of 1991 amid heavy fighting around the city of Vukovar in Croatia, it was a sure sign that the fierce quarrel between Serbia and Croatia over the direction post-Tito Yugoslavia should take was tumbling towards an all-out war.

Yesterday's reopening was a more humble affair - a mere three carriages trundled the few miles from Vukovar in eastern Croatia to Sid, on Serbia's western border. The train was expected to make the return

journey after a brief ceremony hosted by Serb, Croat and UN officials.

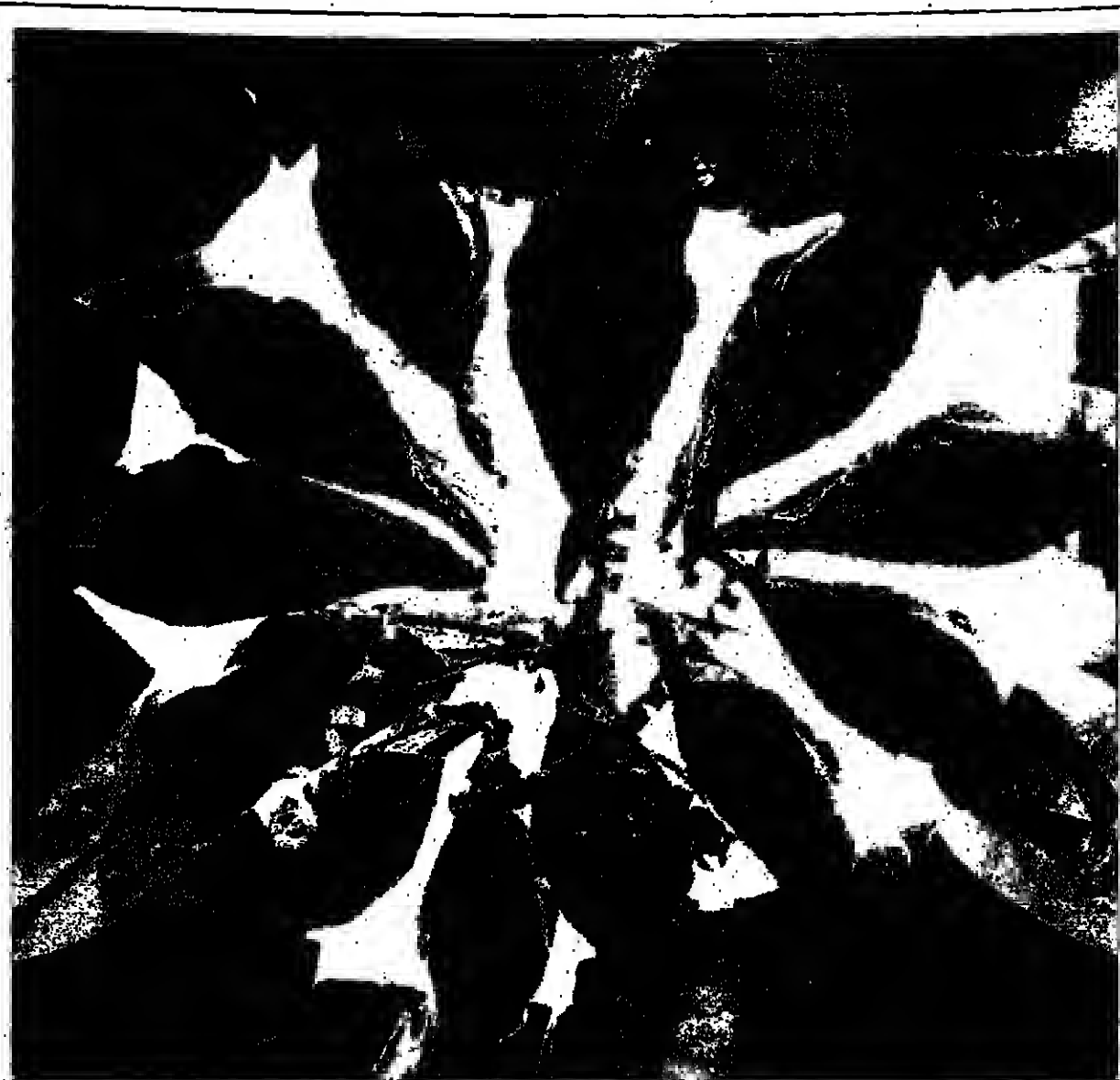
The event was historic, none the less. Since war broke out between the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army and the forces of the breakaway Croatian republic, Serbs and Croats have lived almost hermetically sealed off from one another.

The road border between the two states was, until recently, closed to all except UN peacekeepers patrolling the war-devastated and disputed, Serb-occupied stretch of eastern Slavonia. In Croatia, motorway signs that pointed to destinations in Serbia were taken down or painted over.

Buses and rail passengers wishing to reach one another's capital cities were forced to take vast detours through southern Hungary and even Austria. Telephone lines were similarly cut.

The slow resumption of ties and rail and land traffic, in a sense, an admission of defeat by the Serbs. It suggests they recognise the border between Serbia and Croatia is fixed and final and have given up any hope of annexing the Serb-populated Krajina region. After Croatia reconquered Krajina with relative ease in August 1995, those hopes were dashed, and the two eventually recognised each other in 1996.

Trains connecting Zagreb with Belgrade are expected to be restored by 1998. "Step by step, and we'll have again a four-hour journey to Belgrade," said Veljko, 33, whose private firm is working on restoring business ties with companies in Belgrade. "With passports in pockets this time," he said. "But that's life."



Members of the Wasungen Carnival Club in Thuringen, Germany, which has been holding an annual carnival since 1534. The town's Silly Season officially begins at 11.11am on 11 November each year. Photograph: AFP

Riot fears prompt Belgian town to ban gatherings

The mayor of Lokeren in northern Belgium issued a special decree yesterday banning people from gathering in groups of more than five. The move follows days of unrest in Brussels sparked off after police fatally shot an alleged Moroccan drugs dealer on Friday.

Hundreds of mainly North African immigrant youths have clashed with armed police, smashing windows and overturning cars in Brussels, and the disturbances have spread outside the capital. On Monday night, immigrant youths in Lokeren pelted police with stones and overturned a patrol car.

— Reuters, Brussels

It's good to talk in Finland

Finland, already the world's biggest cellular phone user, has set a new record with more than 40 mobile phones per 100 people, the government announced. More than 2 million people have mobile phones in the country of 5 million, and Finns are signing up for new phones at a rate of 50,000 a month, said Mikael Akerman, a researcher at the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

In 1996, about 500,000 people became new mobile phone subscribers, up 35 per cent from 370,000 the year before. Close behind Finland was Norway with 34 mobile subscriptions per 100 people at the beginning of October, followed by Sweden with 33.

Other countries in Europe with more than 20 mobile phones per 100 people are Denmark and Iceland. Britain has 13, Germany and France about 7 subscriptions per 100 people. Australia had 28 mobile phones per 100 people, the United States 20 and Japan 19, according to the ministry.

Albanians weep for Diana

A magazine devoted to the life and death of Princess Diana went on sale in Albania yesterday and was snapped up with passion by Albanians eager for a moment of the "People's Princess". "It's selling really fast. Women almost start crying in the shop when they open the magazine," one shop owner said. The British princess never visited Albania.

— Reuters, Tirana

Missing billions blow Germany's EMU target off course

Germany is 40bn deutschmarks short of achieving the goals laid down by the Maastricht Treaty for European Monetary Union. In their half-yearly report, experts estimating the government's tax revenue yesterday uncovered a hole that is DM17.3bn deep this year, and they said another DM22.4bn would go missing next year.

The shortfall is the result of slower than expected economic growth in the first half of the year, and, consequently, larger than projected state spending on the growing number of unemployed. Nearly half a million more Germans are out of work now than this time last year.

The new hole, which was predicted by opposition parties months ago, comes as a severe embarrassment to the government and especially to Theo Waigel, the finance minister. He has staked his political future on the pledge that Germany will fulfil to the last decimal point the Maastricht deficit criteria.

With no chance of fulfilling the requirements on total public debt, the government is committed to keeping the budget deficit under 3 per cent of GDP. Having placed the budget on course for a "point landing", Mr Waigel urgently needs to find the missing money.

"Despite expected tax revenue shortfalls, it will be possible to hold to the Maastricht Treaty's 3 per cent criterion," Mr Waigel declared yesterday.

That has been the mantra all year, amid deteriorating economic conditions.

Although decimal points are largely academic, the three-point-nought goal has become a totem of commitment to a hard euro, a symbol of Germany's determination to allow no slacking off.

Yesterday's estimates come in the wake of a series of crises over the budget, each of which threatens the survival of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's govern-

ment and the prospects of the euro.

Six months ago, when the same experts uncovered the first of the budget holes, Mr Waigel was forced to fly cap in hand to the gnomes of Frankfurt.

His scheme to convert the Bundesbank's hoard of gold into government assets was defeated by the bankers, and Mr Waigel had to sell off shares of some publicly-owned companies instead.

In spite of the setback, the finance minister has not yet renounced alchemy. "Interest-

swaps" the withholding of debt repayments and other financial trickery are likely to feature in his arsenal in the last two months of the year. Such measures, coupled with yet more cuts in public spending, should ensure that, come 31 December, the books will show the numbers that everybody in Europe wants to see.

— Imre Karacs, Bonn

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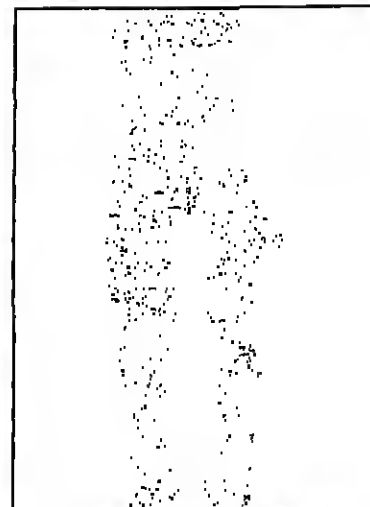
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You could take Kate Moss home if you're feeling charitable



'Kate, 1997', by David Sims, for 'Harper's Bazaar'



Top: 'Carolyn on All Fours', by Kim Andreoli, for German 'Marie Claire'. Above left: Sandro Sodano's image for 'Visionaire 2000'. Above right: 'Ladies' tights', by Katerina Jebb

Some of the best fashion photographs anywhere are for sale, says Tamsin Blanchard, for a good cause, but for one day only.

It is not often that you get the chance to own your own Kate Moss. On Friday, the annual charity exhibition *Fashion Exposures* opens to the public, giving you a one-day opportunity to buy original prints by fashion photographers. One of the highlights is this fabulously natural shot of la Moss, taken by David Sims for *Harper's Bazaar* last year.

Each year, fashion photographers donate a print to be sold in aid of the industry's charity, Fashion Acts. Last year you could pick up a portrait of Ossie Clark by Barry Lategan, a larger-than-life Steven Meisel or a Patrick Demarchelier. This

year's photographers include Jeanloup Sieff, Linda and her daughter Mary McCartney, Steven Klein, and Katerina Jebb. Followers of fashion pages will also be familiar with Sheridan Morley's shot of a sun-dappled model Tizer Bailey, as seen in the *Independent on Sunday* Review, Gavin Bond's girl on a swing, taken for *Vogue Australia*, Sandro Sodano's picture of Michelle Hicks and Honor Fraser for *Visioaire's Fashion 2000* book, and Garth Meyer's images of Africa.

If you are interested in fashion or portrait photography, not only is this a rare opportunity to start or stock up a collection, it is also a chance to sport some stars of the future. Last year, Tim Walker's image sold for a snip at £50. He had just finished a stint assisting Richard Avedon. Now he's shooting for *British Vogue*. You never know whose picture may turn out to be an investment

— and you do not often see so many photographers' work under one roof.

If you are more than just a window shopper, you have the bonus of knowing that your money is going to a worthy cause. *Fashion Acts* causes this year include Devon HIV and Aids, The Food Chain, a meals-on-wheels service for people living with HIV and Aids, and Infant Aid, which helps support children in Romania. Last year *Fashion Exposures* raised £28,000. This year, they are aiming for £30,000.

If you see a picture you really like but can't afford, don't be afraid to make an offer. The bad news is that the show is for one day only.

'Fashion Exposures', at the Royal Society of British Sculptors, Dora House, 108 Old Brompton Road, London SW7, Friday 14 November, noon-7pm.

Give the man some Manolo's

Manolo Blahnik famously makes shoes for women to die for. Now, says Damian Foxe, he is making shoes for men to live for.

Such is the wizardry of Manolo Blahnik's fantastical footwear, that if he had been plying his craft in the 16th century he would surely have been burnt at the stake. If silhouettes are the work of the devil, then Blahnik's shoes are evil little miracles.

Women will gasp "must have" and "to die for" at the mere mention of his name. But ask most men, and they won't have the least idea who or what you're talking about.

All that is about to change. Blahnik, who became famous for his sexy women's shoes throughout the Eighties and Nineties, in fact opened his London shop in 1973 making shoes for men. Next February he will return to his brogue last with an entire menswear collection, incorporating 15 styles of shoes and sandals in a colour palette befitting Brighton's biggest rock candy shop. Prices of sandals start at £200, and for shoes at £275.

"So many men keep pestering me to make them shoes, and now seems like the right time to do it," says Blahnik. In fact, the designer has always kept his hand in the men's market, creating a small number of made-to-measure shoes for select customers, including his three male employees.

"I bought my first pair before I even started working here," explains Jamie Prieto, who works at Blahnik's London boutique, "and I have honestly never found anything better.

We had one customer who came in and ordered nine pairs of the same shoe, all in the same colour." The reason? He had discovered what he considered to be the perfect pair of shoes.

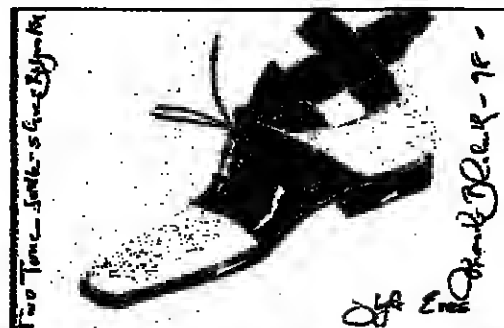
However, Blahnik's collection may not be to every man's taste. Far from the flights of fancy which he so brilliantly creates for women, his styles for men all start from a classical base, with Oxfords, brogues, monk straps and even desert boots having a major influence. Neat, uncluttered, immaculately finished, every pair begs to appear in a Merchant Ivory adaptation, all olde worlde

English understatement and Continental sophistication.

"Men care more about cut and comfort, and creating a sense of harmony," explains Blahnik. Above all, however, he claims that they want quality. "Men like shoes to be an old friend that will last for ages."

Eventually, Blahnik hopes that his male customers will become as adventurous as the women. "For next season we will incorporate even more unusual styles, perhaps using brocade for evening, and introducing colours such as dusty pink and acid green for day."

In the meantime, however,



Role reversal: Manolo Blahnik's sketch (top) for a modern-day Oxford shoe; traditional Lobb styling (above) for classic women's shoes

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Let's have no more bleating about the Bush

Yes, London's premier new-writing venue has just suffered a grant cut. But it's also just won this year's Empty Space Award. James Christopher celebrates 25 years of dramatic innovation atop a West London pub.

The Bush Theatre will celebrate its 25th birthday on 30 November by presenting extracts from 14 of its greatest hits performed by the original casts. It's an important piece of back-slapping, not because you will be able to see Lynda La Plante and Simon Callow fluff their lines in Snoo Wilson's *The Soul of the White Ant*. But because 25 years of digging rough diamonds out of the fringe has made the Bush one of the most experienced prospectors of raw talent in Europe.

I was shocked to discover that this pub theatre was actually founded by Brian McDermott, a maverick who has been touring his transvestite solo turn, *The Adolf Hitler Show*, indiscriminately around the fringe for

premises, he was still a surprise choice when theatre's most famous football haircut, Dominic Dromgoole, resigned two years ago. "You'll never get it in a million years," said Dromgoole when Bradwell phoned to ask whether he should apply. Bradwell out-talked his young opponents and duly got the job.

Bradwell has a remarkable perspective on the place he calls home. Some of it is contained in the introduction to *The Bush Theatre Book* (Methuen Drama, £9.99). Other parts of it have passed into theatrical folklore. The list of those who gave to the cause reads like a Who's Who of British theatre, ranging from directors like Jenny Topper and Nicky Pallot to writers like Stephen Poliakoff, Snoo Wilson, Doug Lucie, Sharrman MacDonald and Jonathan Harvey.

The Bush's proximity to some of the most unlovely streets in London has played its own part too. During Billy Roche's *Wexford Trilogy*, a drunk staggered up the fire escape (the only way for the actors to get to the dressing-room), walked across the set and out the door on his way

has been unceremoniously knocked back. They, along with Greenwich Theatre, the Gate and BAC, have just suffered dramatic grant cuts after having been told by their respective funding bodies that the money was almost certainly in place. The winning of the 1997 Peter Brook Empty Space Award last night will have taken some of the sting out of the financial disappointment. But new writing policies cannot survive on £2,000 prize money alone.

"Hence the fuss over the Gala, the book and the 25 years," explains Bradwell. "The money from that, and the Empty Space Award, will hopefully shift us up another gear. We already have a writers' group but I'm looking for more interaction. They're not very good at it," he notes dryly. "I'm particularly keen on 'mentoring': pairing writers like Doug Lucie with first-timers."

"It's too easy to see the Bush as a stepping-stone for writers on the way to greater glory," muses Bradwell. "It's bound to look like that. After all, new writers go on and do other things. But it's not all about discovery. It's about nurturing too. In that respect we're as important nationally as the Royal Court."

"The other thing we're working on," he continues, "is establishing a circuit of new writing with theatres in America. We're sending *Love and Understanding* to the Long Wharf Theatre (an old sausage factory) in New Haven and they're sending us David Rabe's *A Question of Mercy*. Hopefully we can set up a regular exchange like Max Stafford-Clark at the Court had with Joe Papp's Public Theatre in New York."

So much for the future. What of the present? "We are in a culture of winners and losers," argues Bradwell. "Reactions are extreme. You're either Mark Ravenhill and fabulously successful with your first play or you can curl up and die. There isn't the same venue loyalty as there used to be. People don't come to see new writing per se. They come if the play is an event. Long gone are the days when you could look at the bookings list and see the same names coming back. You can never tell who or what the Bush audience is now. It's the same everywhere. Our kickback is that we do get younger audiences prepared to sample something different after seeing, say, Kate Beckinsale in *Clocks and Whistles* [by Samuel Adamson] because she's in and she's sexy."

What happened to that glorious loyalty? "Theatre has become expensive," says Bradwell. "And there's a lot more competition. The culture is dominated by marketing. The West Yorkshire Playhouse has people doing jobs that didn't exist 10 years ago: there's a head of corporate entertainment, a head of marketing, a head of fundraising, and people running about with degrees in photocopying. Needless to say, the fuckers still manage to spell your name wrong in the programme."

Some things seem destined never to change.

The Bush's latest commission, Helen Blakeman's *Caravan*, opens this Friday at the Bush, Shepherd's Bush Green, London W12 (booking: 0181-743 3388). Its 25th Birthday Gala is on Sun 30 Nov at the Royal Court Theatre Downstairs, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (booking: 0171-602 3703).



Photograph: Geraint Lewis

decades. For many years I thought, "There but for the grace of God goes most of the fringe". I must now eat humble pie. McDermott, who was regularly arrested for his inflammatory speeches at Hyde Park Corner, ran the Bush with the inspired abandon of an Edinburgh festival impresario. Between 1972 and 1974 the Bush produced a staggering 77 productions. The Bush's new writing policy was born here.

Shows opened morning, noon and night and featured everything from nudity to performing rats. The only discernible pattern was a commitment to new writers like John McGrath, John Arden, David Edgar, Howard Barker, Edward Bond and a certain young hotshot called Tina Brown. You couldn't have invented a more wayward past.

Now the Bush has grown up. The annual programme is a modest nine productions and a thousand new scripts hit the doormat every year. What does it feel like? "It feels like an awfully long time," says the current artistic director Mike Bradwell. And so it should. Bradwell was first here in 1974 with *Hull Truck* in a piece he devised called *The Knowledge*. And he's been coming back with supernatural regularity ever since.

Despite knocking up 24 shows on the

to his next pint. This year, when Culture Secretary Chris Smith turned up for a performance of Joe Penhall's *Love and Understanding*, a Bulgarian heavy-metal guitarist high on drugs had to be prised from the dressing-room before the show could go on.

Bradwell makes the challenges for the next 25 years sound as simple as Tim Roth falling through an open window and plunging to his death in the Goldhawk Road every night during Nick Darke's *The Oven Glove Murders*. "People think I'm making this up but the only criteria at the Bush is to find good new plays and put them on to the best of our ability. That's it. That's the agenda. We've currently got five women writers on commission not because we think there's a political point to be addressed, but for the simple reason that they are writing the best plays. Most of the scripts that come through the door are pastiches of Mark Ravenhill's *Shopping and Fucking*. Last year it was *Mojo*. And next year it will be Princess Diana."

Money, as ever, is a major priority as is "a space to kick new plays about". But despite an exemplary application for half a million pounds from the Lottery-funded Arts for Everybody scheme, the Bush



Happy hour: below, early regulars Simon Callow and Lynda La Plante, who will be resurrecting Snoo Wilson's *The Soul of the White Ant* for the theatre's 25th birthday celebration. Far left, a scene from Joe Penhall's *Love and Understanding*, soon to appear in a disused sausage factory somewhere near you (if you live in New Haven).



The road to hell is paved with good intentions, all the way from Thessaloniki

A lost play by Euripides has been brought back to life by Kenneth McLeish. Robert Hanks talks to Nick Philippou, artistic director of the Actors Touring Company, about his efforts to resurrect ancient myths for today.

Stop me if you've heard this one: Orpheus, son of the muse Calliope and the sun-god Apollo (or, if you prefer it, the Thracian king Oeagrus), was the greatest poet and musician of all time. When his wife, Eurydice, was killed by a snake, he descended into the Underworld, and used his music to charm Hades into letting him take her back to the world of the living. Hades agreed, on condition that Orpheus didn't look at Eurydice until she was safely in sunlight. She followed him up towards the surface; but as he arrived, he looked over his shoulder to check she was still there, and she vanished. Subsequently, Orpheus was torn apart by maenads.

The myth of Orpheus has been retold many times, in many forms. Musicians, naturally, have been particularly fond of it - Monteverdi's and Gluck's are the most famous operas, but if you include the many parodies the tale has inspired, there have been more than 70 other versions, from Peri's *Euridice* of 1600 (the first extant opera) to Harrison Birtwistle's *The Mask of Orpheus* in 1986. The 14th-century poem "Sir Orfeo" made it a charming (and happy) Celtic romance. It

has been done as a surreal, playful tragedy of mirrors and dreams in Jean Cocteau's poetic film *Orphée*, as a colourful slice of Brazilian carnival life, with a tram driver killing his girlfriend and himself, in the film *Black Orpheus*. Tennessee Williams brought us hell on earth in a Mississippi town in *Orpheus Descending*. You could even argue that *Alice in Wonderland* was sort of inspired by it (what is the tumble down the rabbit-hole but a descent into the underworld?). And Cocteau's mirrored fantasy must owe something to *Through the Looking-Glass*.

All of a sudden, Orpheus seems to have come into his own, with productions of Monteverdi's opera and Balanchine's ballet, an Orpheus symposium - featuring 40 Orphic events - taking place in Athens this month, and ATC's staging of a new version by Kenneth McLeish arriving at the Lyric, Hammersmith, after two months touring Greece, Northern Ireland and England.

Clearly, this is a myth with universal appeal, but which has particular resonances for us, living at this moment in history. At any rate, that's the sort of spiel you expect from Nick Philippou, ATC's artistic director and director of the new production. As it turns out, though, he is suspicious of that sort of thinking, an attitude he developed while working on ATC's previous collaboration with McLeish, a translation of a little-known play by Euripides, *Ion* - *The Lost Boy Found*. Together with the Greek theatre company Pirmatiki Skini, ATC put on two productions, one in Greek, one in English, both touring at the



'A template for how we feel about grief and loss,' says Nick Philippou, ATC's director of 'Orpheus' Simon Annand

same time, the Greek one visiting England while the English one visited Greece: "It was a nightmare. Trying to understand one another - not linguistically, but culturally - was very, very extraordinary. But it was," he adds, "a success."

From this experience, Philippou "got slightly disenchanted with the idea of the universality of theatre - the idea that you can do *Hamlet* and it can mean everything to people now." Myths he describes as "a kind of template for the way that we might feel and think about certain issues, like death, loss,

grief, longing and aspiration." Any particular version of a myth, on the other hand, will be addressed to an audience and a time - in his plays, Euripides was speaking about Athens to Athenians, and there's no reason why we should recognise ourselves in his words as they would have. "I'm not saying that those plays now are irrelevant. I'm saying that there's another way of approaching those myths and those plays. I'm saying, actually we can make the bloodlines between the plays and our audience stronger and clearer by actually intervening in the text."

From this conviction of the particularity of theatre, there sprang the idea of commissioning new writers to produce their own responses to great plays of the past. The first fruits of this policy were seen earlier this year in ATC's staging of a new *Faust* by Mark Ravenhill (author of *Shopping and Fucking*, and the man hired by the BBC in its ultimately unsuccessful attempt to keep *This Life* going). This *Faust* mixed camcorders, the Internet and Michel Foucault with drugs and gay sex in California motels: a clever and witty drama which

and I felt that, really, I don't think we felt that optimistic about the world."

But thrusting modernity is not what he wants to achieve. In answer to the question of commissioning contemporary plays, he says: "This is an attempt to use the past. I think one of the great problems with some new writing in this country at the moment is that it wants to be new. It wants to break forward... It's very rare that new writing tours extensively. New writing has its home at the Royal Court, it's laudable there, it will then have no other significant productions. Very few plays tour because there isn't a kind of universality in them, either in their philosophical framework or their formal framework."

Universality doesn't necessarily imply universal appeal: "One of the things that these old stories do," Philippou reckons, "is they create an alienating effect, they distance an audience from their immediate concerns." So Kenneth McLeish's *Orpheus* is written as a straightforward Greek tragedy, with all the attendant apparatus - chorus, long speeches, prologue spoken by a god. The project began, in fact, as an attempt to "do a *Jurassic Park*" on Euripides' lost treatment of Orpheus.

The final result has been through a number of filters, though. Using money from the European Commission's Kalcidoscope fund, established to encourage multinational collaborations, McLeish and Philippou spent 12 months workshopping the piece with young Irish actors in Dublin.

The look of the production - which Philippou describes as "a kind of peasant circus" - was determined by the Greek designer Apostolos Vettas (who also worked on ATC's *Ion*), while the score is a salmagundi of Thracian sounds on Irish instruments, composed by Kostas Vomvolos.

The finished play, premiered in September in Thessaloniki, the current European City of Culture, shouldn't be easy to pin down to any one culture: "What we wanted to do was try and find a way of telling the story in the most potentially fluid way, so that an audience can come to it and say, 'This play is for me about grief', another member of the audience can come to it and say, 'This play for me is about loss' or 'This play is for me about belief, faith'."

So that's, perhaps, why myths endure - not because they contain some eternal truth, but because they avoid any definite statements at all: they're vessels waiting to be filled. And *Orpheus* is a myth about music - the most abstract art of all, eternally evading interpretation - and hence even more suggestive, more open-ended. Perhaps that's what Kenneth McLeish is getting at in the final lines of his play, when the nymph Dryas sums it all up: "It's myth. Myth's all there is. / Welcome the unexpected. It's up to you." Kenneth McLeish's *Orpheus*: 13 Nov, Medina Theatre, Newport, Isle of Wight (01923 527020); 14-15 Nov, Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead (01442 242827); 18 Nov-6 Dec, Lyric Theatre Hammersmith, London (0181-741 2311).

The tabloid

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19/FEATURES

BELOVED AND BONK

Diary of a divorce



We've been to France, Bunny, Buster and me, in a last-minute dash before the weather finally dissolves into terminal grey for the winter. This may seem like no big deal to you, but I managed to get my underwear into a good approximation of a reef knot before we left, because it was the first time I had taken the kids abroad on my own.

It's not that I was bothered about the language barrier - I can remember all 20 words of my O-level French, so I'm practically fluent. It was the driving on the other side of the road that worried me.

When Beloved and I used to go on holiday to France, he did the driving. Because with him twitching in the passenger seat, and stiffening every time I went round a corner, I began to believe that I was far too emotionally unstable to drive anywhere but down deserted country lanes in dear old Blighty. And only then with someone walking in front with a red flag. Driving Abroad became something that only Terribly Successful People who could have passed the coordination tests to become RAF fighter pilots were capable of. The fact that ancient French persons with single eyes, wooden legs and three goats on the passenger seat seemed to manage it totally escaped me.

So by the time we drove off the ferry into a bright, sparkly French autumn, I had Bunny and Buster chanting "right hand side, right hand side" in the back seat in case I suddenly lost my marbles, drove on the left and killed us all (thereby proving to Beloved that I truly wasn't safe out on my own).

But I didn't. I just tottled off the ferry and on down the road, just as if it were something everybody did every day. "Oh," I thought, "driving. Like what I do all the time. Hundreds of miles of it. Only on the other side of the road."

That's how I discovered that I could have been a) Very Successful or b) an RAF test pilot. Which made me extremely happy, and I zoomed off through the countryside taking in freshly ploughed fields and dinky Breton houses, and feeling full of new confidence and a conviction that I could drive to Vladivostok if I wanted. I began to plan selling the house and setting off around the world for the next 10 years, with Bunny and Buster as travelling companions. Perhaps we could even take a film crew and that nice Mr Palin with us.

Ridiculously buoyed up by my discovery of a missed career in jet planes, I brilliantly negotiated all the little tests of a French holiday. I found where to turn on the water outside our gate; I got the heavy shutters off the windows; I used all 20 of my French words in one visit to the *supermarché*. We really began to enjoy ourselves, cycling to the village to buy croissants, ordering chocolate ice-creams and coffee at cafés, scrounging at street markets. For the first time since Beloved barked off, the three of us felt like something approaching a unit, rather than three bruised cabbages thrust into a dark sack.

That's about when I started seeing Beloved and Bonk. On first sighting they were drinking wine at a seaside brasserie; then I saw them pushing a *supermarché* trolley together; after that they were regularly spotted in cars beside us at junctions and traffic lights. It took me a couple of days to work out that I wasn't *hallucinating*. It was just that every French man and his beautiful, chic wife looked just like them.

I lost it in a big way after that. All the Breton houses and their jolly red remnants of summer geraniums stopped being cute and started being irritating. Cooking on a single gas ring lost the charm of peasant simplicity and began to be a bloody hopeless way to feed two kids. Even the shower got on the at risk register when idiosyncratic spurts of cold amidst the hot had me nearly pulling the entire unit off the wall.

Within two days the kids were reduced to silent fear inside the car while I drove to the next tourist spot wondering if British Consulates still existed, and if so would they take children for a couple of hours while their parent went off and lay on a railway line.

Only the ferry home redeemed the holiday from being a week's worth of miserable memories. It was full of homely, cardiganed Britons and their Crimpened wives. Not a Beloved or Bonk lookalike in sight. The sea was like a piece of stretched cling film, and we ate patisserie out on deck in lemon-juice sunshine. Hey, I thought, I've been travelling with my kids. Vladivostok here we come.

We went to Hull, we lived like legends

It was five years since they had graduated from the University of Humberside. It was time to go back, to confront the past and live for now. Mark Hayman raises a shaking glass to his Alma Mater (you what?).

The words "Live Like Legends" were daubed 3ft high in white paint across the side of a petrol station on Grafton Street, an omen for the weekend, or perhaps just a drunken action by some deluded student.

As I walked along Beverley Road, Hull, it seemed much smaller than I remembered. Perhaps it was the three years in London, or maybe I was just smaller then. Me and Macca, one of the few college friends I had kept in touch with, were making our pilgrimage to the Majobrace, the fulcrum of our college nights (and days for that matter). Memories of ADBs (all day benders), ATs (after time) and any other abbreviations that come to mind. To our disgust, the place no longer held that individual mark and had been transformed into another "Faceless & Firk'n". But who gives? We were here to drink beer, not discuss the décor. This was to be the starting-point and meeting-place for our first reunion in five years.

The first I'd heard about my Humberside University reunion was a brief phone call saying, "Get your cheque in the post, it's going to be massive, everyone's going to be there." Well, that was my initial worry. Did I want to see everyone?

Questions had to be asked, eg were all the lads going, and which goddesses would make an appearance? I suspected all the former would turn up and very few of the latter. I missed the train and wondered if that was going to be the only thing I missed on my trip back to Hull.

Walking into the pub was like re-entering your bedroom at your parents' house; it felt the same, but you knew someone had tidied up since you were last there. There in the corner sat the first of the reunionists - I've known Kev, Pete and Jon since sharing a ball during the first year.

"Look at that fucking coat," they yelled. I must point out I was wearing a huge fur coat, looking like a cross between Huggy Bear and Ron Atkinson on a cold day. But then we were always partial to a spot of dressing up. Once, during one of our many "bad taste" outings, where we would trawl the second-hand shops choosing the worst matching attire, Pete wore a balachava and red tracksuit bottoms with Speedos pulled over them.

After several beers to top up those we had had on the train, the slow flow of ex-students started entering the pub. It's a strange experience, seeing your



Humbersiders formal, informal and legless: Mark Hayman was in grey fur. People commented. Then reunion began and all judgement went for a Burton

past resurrect itself in front of you over a tequila chaser. There were no formalities, no "how are you?", "what are you doing now?" or "how are the kids?" Just lots of pointing and uncontrollable onslaughts of giggling.

Either my eyesight had regressed to soft focus, or everyone looked exactly the same - putting aside various bulges, different haircuts and more expensive clothes. I was feeling the *déjà vu* that would repeat itself throughout the weekend.

However, one old friend seemed to have totally reinvented himself. Neil, at 6ft something, was the scum of the union, renowned for his precise headbutts and the ability to kick hell out of rugby players twice his size. He turned up looking like a Calvin Klein advert, with his broken nose, Dolce & Gabbana glasses and a black poloneck. Luckily, I managed to quell my giggles for this encounter. It turned out that he was now lead singer in a band that supported Oasis, which I thought was reasonably cool. However, later I heard that his coolness did diminish rapidly in front of the girl he woke up with on Sunday morning: to her horror, he was sitting up in bed holding an empty glass of water that he'd just drunk. Nothing strange in that, except that it had contained her contact lenses. Apparently she had a rather dodgy drive home.

After numerous pleas to calm down from the DJ and bouncers, we decided to make our way to the Union. When we arrived, the entrance was surprisingly people-free. Gone were the days of vast queues which led to clambering through skylights into the girls' toilets. A few of the security staff recognised me from my days as Union vice-president but their only welcome was "what the hell are you doing back?" and suchlike. It was touching to know the respect in which I was held.

The building itself had taken on a totally different appearance since its peak around 1990. The black walls, dim lights and beer-soaked Velcro floor had made way for an altogether more sterile environment. Nights spent trawling around, Snakebite Black in hand, snacking the lips on as many girls as possible, seemed an all-too-distant memory. Surprisingly, everyone forewent the opportunity to sample drinks such as blastaways, Snakey Bs and pints of white wine - drinks chosen purely for their lobotomising qualities. The sophisticated replacement was lager with gin chasers. I stood on the balcony for a while, watching over the dance floor as the lads breakdanced and lunged at each other to Abba's "Dancing Queen". This was all watched with total bemusement by the teenage students, most of whom turned into the unwilling victims of a drunken advance.

After renewing an acquaintance with an old goddess with a view to correcting one of my few omissions, only to find out

she was virtually engaged to an old flatmate, I decided to join the aged body-poppers on the dance floor.

The helicopters could almost have been flying overhead as I walked down Cottingham Road, arms outspread, singing Oasis's "All my people right here right now", with the rest following behind me. I admit I had run to the front to play the Pied Piper. But who cares? That's how I had remembered it. As I jumped into a Skoda (Hull's impression of the black cat) with a girl I didn't know, a second feeling of *déjà vu* rushed over me.

After the third attempt, the magnetic key to her hotel room still wouldn't work. I had a strange moment of clarity or maturity, call it what you will. During my college years, a locked door would never have halted our progress, but I only had to look down the hall to the pot plant in the corner to remember. We had numerous halls in that hotel, and all ended with every nook and cranny being filled by couples in evening dress that disguised their unsophisticated intentions. This was the moment when I realised I really had

changed. I made my excuses and caught another Skoda back to my place of residence.

Saturday was to be an all-dayer in Hull's old town, followed by the reunion proper held in a suite at LA's, probably the city's cheesiest nightclub.

However, on meeting Fuzzy Duck, the amusement was renewed. Fuzzy is so called because of his inability to play the drinking game of the same name. He's partly deaf, and every time it was his turn to say "fuzzy duck" or "duck fuzz" he couldn't quite hear what was said before and just said, "ahh fuck it" and downed three fingers of beer.

As the neon blue of LA's ultraviolet danced off the faces from my past, I felt I'd entered my own twilight zone. Looking through the alcoholic haze of the day I dimly recognised veteran after veteran of drunken encounters in the Union or regular faces from around campus.

I was struck by how well the women were dressed. The gulf between student attire and the

clothes of people with incomes seemed to be greater for females. In fact, another sweep of the room left me in no doubt that the gulf was not merely that of fashion. The girls had largely evolved into women, whereas the boys, lunging around the dance floor and cracking into old flames, had definitely remained boys.

Questions such as "what are you doing now?" had been surprisingly thin on the ground. I guess the surreal environment would have been tarnished by punctuations of reality. Jimmy, a beer monster *extraordinaire*, did find time to reveal his present vocation. After forays into an array of occupations he'd settled on opening a sandwich shop in Sheffield. He suggested I should pay him a visit and sample his top-of-the-range collection: the "Armani sarot", a perfect example of post-student sophistication.

The night began to merge easily into the rest of the weekend. Had it not been for the welcoming bar of the Royal Hotel, the evening would have been tragically cut short. "Speech, speech," Macca had decided it was time he thanked everyone for coming, even though it had been

Damien who had organised the event. However, no sooner had he raised himself on to a platform between two pot plants than he fell off. A fitting finale.

"Let's stay another night," "Let's stay for two fucking weeks!"

As we sat in the Brace on Sunday afternoon nursing our heads with a few comforting beers, the goodbyes and "let's do this again next year" began.

Finally we sat there alone, three sad amigos with train tickets for Monday. There was nothing else for it but to reflect on the weekend through the glass sides of yet another few pints.

The train journey back was a depressing affair, with few words spoken and the onset of DTs. As I sat there, brain numbed, feeling as if I'd been to hell and back, not Hull and back, a broad smile crept across my face.

I closed my eyes and pictured those words: "Live Like Legends", starting in me three days earlier. It was nice to think they were still there, six years after I'd painted them.

The tabloid casting couch of Lara Croft

When people free associate on the subject of Lara Croft, breasts are what come to mind - and the actresses made for the part choose themselves. But, asks Paul McCann, is it real?



Frontrunners for the Lara Croft role: Elizabeth Hurley and Sandra Bullock

An unholy alliance has been formed between the dirty mags in the national press and the dirty anomalies of the Internet.

Between them they have conspired to create a movie star bunfight story where none exists and given picture editors *carte blanche* to reproduce pictures of large-breasted actresses and an even larger-breasted fictitious computer game character until we all die of boredom.

The story in question is the supposed making of a movie version of the bit computer game Tomb Raider - and more importantly who will play the game's over-inflated hero Lara Croft.

Croft, if you've been in a persistent vegetative state for a year, is the first female star of

the computer games world. Unlike the speed-freak pizza delivery man Super Mario, her popularity is based less on her antics than her attributes. As if proof were needed that computer game players spend an unhealthy amount of time gripping their joysticks, her popularity is built on the fact that she's built. Really built.

Way back in June a computer game magazine announced that Eidos, the maker of Tomb Raider, was in talks with a Hollywood studio about making a movie version of the game. Eidos already has a con-

tract to make computer games out of MGM movie characters, so going back the other way didn't seem a bad idea - unless of course you've seen the movie version of *Super Mario Bros* starring Bob Hoskins.

Since the original story of the movie negotiation started, the 150 or so unofficial Tomb Raider web sites on the net started slobbering over who might play a live action Lara.

Liz Hurley was immediately on the list, her career has largely been based on the same two attributes as Lara Croft so there's little surprise there.

Then there were stories - again on the web - that Bruce Willis had bought the software company to guarantee the role for Demi Moore.

Next came a number of Internet polls about who should play the lots of flesh and blood Lara - with Sandra Bullock coming out ahead of Hurley and Rhona Mitra, the woman who Lara was based on, and who is alleged to have had breast implants so she could, er, fill the role.

These stories were all faithfully repeated by the tabloids. In August the Scottish *Sunday*

Mail reported that Ms Hurley was due to take the role and even that she was to fight a bad-breasted Sharon Stone. This did not stop *The Sun* slapping an exclusive banner on its story yesterday that Hurley would play Lara.

In fact Eidos is still negotiating rights with a number of US studios and is yet to even decide if Lara will be played by a person or by digital animation.

"Every time the tabloids mention Lara and the movie it gives them the opportunity to print pictures of lovely ladies with large breasts," says Larry Sparks, world-wide marketing director for Eidos.

Mr Sparks hints that he is unhappy with such coverage. Lara has turned Eidos from a £1.3m loss to £3.1m profit according to its last results and she has shifted 2.7 million games world-wide. He doesn't want over-exposure to kill her off like the other flesh-revealing icons of contemporary adolescence who this week sacked their manager.

But at the same time Tomb Raider II is released in a few weeks and breast-obsessed publicity probably doesn't hurt.

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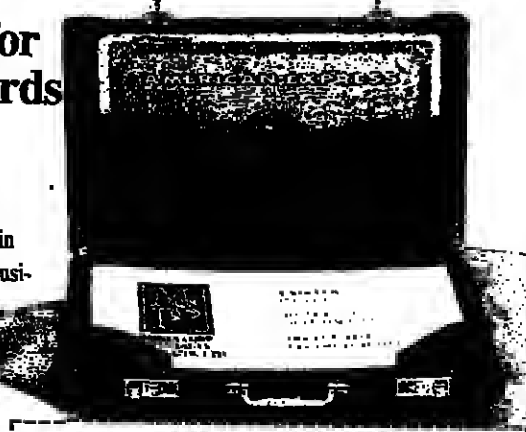
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Under doctors' orders – where the NHS belongs



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Labour was elected to power on a promise to cut National Health Service red tape and end the inequity introduced by the Tory health service reforms. The internal market – condemned by the British Medical Association as an “infernal bazaar” – had set trust against trust, created a bonanza for managers and administrators and consumed forests of trees to produce the thousands of contracts daily exchanged between hospitals, GPs and health authorities.

Seven months on, the new Government has devised a plan that is radical in intent but which seeks to improve on the old order, not to overthrow it. Ministers recognise that a major shake-up would not be welcomed by the white coats in the front line. Evolution, not revolution, is the word.

The internal market is effectively abolished although something close to it remains in the form of the “service agreements” between the GP collectives and the hospitals with whom they choose to work. It is the end of GP fundholding

but opposition from disgruntled fundholders is likely to be minimised by the vast new powers that are being handed to family doctors.

This is the kernel of the new plans and they go further than anything that has so far been hinted at. The logic is impeccable. Putting GPs who are in daily contact with patients in the driving seat of the NHS ensures that the commissioning of services is anchored in a grassroots understanding of patient needs.

But will the GPs have either the interest or the managerial capacity to run the commissioning process? Most GPs want to treat patients, not sit on committees and shuffle bits of paper. Concern about the abolition of GP fundholding, which currently covers more than half the population, centres on whether the remaining non-fundholders have the managerial nous to handle their own budgets.

The GP collectives proposed in the White Paper will need extensive managerial support. They will function as mini-

health authorities, and since there will be more of them – perhaps 500-600 compared with the existing 190 health authorities – it is hard to see how this will contribute to the oft-promised reduction in grey suits.

There are questions too about incentives to efficiency and improved performance. Under the existing market system, competition provides the lever. GP fundholders can shop around for the best deal from their local NHS trusts (or even distant ones) and get to keep any savings they make on their annual budgets for reinvestment in their practices – a powerful individual incentive which will be lost in the new system.

Nor will the abolition of fundholding end inequity. The charge is that GP fundholders with their superior bargaining power have been able to negotiate advantageous deals for their patients which have led to queue jumping of hospital waiting lists and the introduction of a two-tier service. Critics point out, however, that switching budgets from fundholders to GP

collectives will simply shift inequity from the local practice level to the level of the collective.

The most radical aspect of the plan is the decision to merge hospital and GP budgets so that the GP collectives can decide how care is to be provided. Budgets for drugs, health visitors, community nursing and hospital services can then be balanced against one another to provide person-centred rather than institution-centred care.

The scheme has something in common with American health maintenance organisations which have a fixed budget to provide all necessary care to their members. By ensuring members remain healthy, costs are reduced and when care is needed there is an incentive to provide it as close to people's homes as possible, where it is cheapest. In the same way the aim of the GP collectives will be to provide services in the most cost-efficient way with an emphasis on out-patient and day-case care.

In the long term, budgets might be created for specific services such as cancer or paediatrics which would cross the boundaries between GP, hospital and community provision.

An important feature of the White Paper is that it lays down no time-scale for introduction of the plan. Labour believe they will be around for some time and can afford to be leisurely. The recent document inviting bids under the health action zone initiative to raise health-care standards in deprived inner cities does not envisage evaluation until after the next election.

Under the market system, the NHS has lacked strategic direction. It has grown by accretion, with extra services bolted on in response to demand. The benefit has been to turn the health service from a monolithic, inward looking institution into a responsive, outward looking organisation. The test for the Government's new proposals will be whether they preserve that responsiveness while adding new purpose.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number. Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Threat to the ENO

Sir: I served as the honorary secretary of the board of directors of the English National Opera in the 1980s, and for a short period as a member of the board, I am well aware of the financial and other considerations that have led the Culture Secretary to propose the merging of the Royal Opera and the ENO at the redeveloped Royal Opera House.

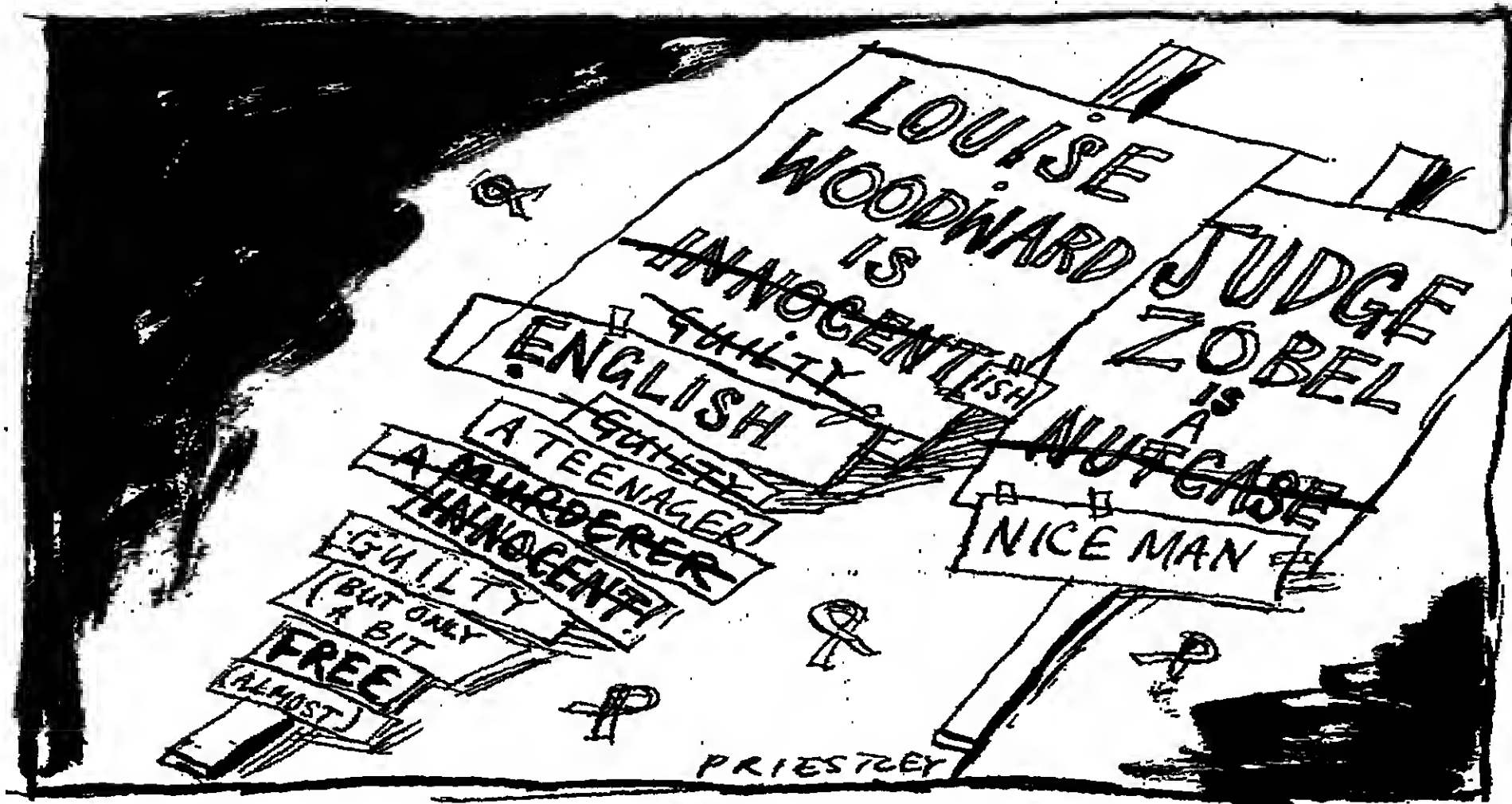
However, I have no doubt that this would quickly destroy the ENO's distinct identity. As a third company sharing the new Covent Garden Theatre it would be impossible for it to maintain the audience and the mission that it has so successfully developed at the Coliseum.

This mission is both artistic and social. The artistic one is to present opera in a stimulating form in the language that its audience can understand. The social one is to make opera available at reasonable prices (the top price at the Coliseum has been held at barely 25 per cent of the top prices at the Royal Opera House) to as wide an audience as possible. Inevitably, because of the costs of touring, this has been mainly an audience from London and surrounding areas. But anyone who has regularly attended the Coliseum, or has taken part in the educational and community activities of its Baylis Programme, can endorse what I say. I still have vivid memories, for example, of the rows of school children from Hackney, attending an opera performance for the first time, who sat enthralled during the hypnotic performances of *Admetus*.

It would be a tragedy to sacrifice these achievements by effectively abolishing the ENO as a distinct opera company. I very much hope, therefore, that before any final recommendations are made, Sir Richard Eyre, despite the very difficult financial issues involved, will consider every possible means of preserving the ENO (in my view, preferably still at the Coliseum site) as a separate entity.

Sir BRIAN UNWIN
Luxembourg

Sir: Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, has come up with the right solution for the Royal Opera House. The idea that the



Royal Opera, the Royal Ballet and the English National Opera companies could not share the same building is nonsense. The ballet could perform at 2.30, ENO could perform at 6.45, and the Royal Opera could perform at 9.00.

It will be argued that operas cannot be done in two hours. Cut them, then. Most operas are far too long anyway. The Crush Bar could be hired out to corporations, who could then still come to Covent Garden but without having the inconvenience and boredom of sitting through an opera.

Smith's ideas could be carried over to the Royal National Theatre, where there are three theatres. What a waste! Let the RNT keep the Lyttelton, but give the Olivier to the RSC and the Cottesloe to the Royal Court. The classics are extremely expensive. Savings could easily be made. Instead of *Three Sisters*, have *Two Sisters*.

Instead of *The Cherry Orchard* have *The Cherry Tree*, instead of *A Month in the Country* have *A Day in the Country*. Instead of *Romeo and Juliet* have either *Romeo* or *Juliet*.

Nor does London need so many art galleries. I visited the Royal Academy, the Tate Gallery and the Hayward Gallery the other morning. There is a terrible waste of space below, above and between the pictures. Not one gallery used the ceiling. If the ceiling was good enough for Michelangelo, then the ceiling should be good enough for everybody else. Keep one gallery. Scrap the other two. ROBERT TANTICH
London W2

Foxy arguments

Sir: The arguments put forward by those who support fox hunting get sillier by the day (Letters, 7 November). First they

argued that hunting was necessary to control fox numbers, then they claimed it was critical to the rural economy and that it had the support of most country people. Now that these claims have been disproved we are told that the real purpose of hunting is to provide a vulpine-friendly euthanasia service to relieve the suffering of elderly foxes in distress!

Hunting does not control fox numbers, it merely accelerates the turnover of the fox population – both the death and birth rates are increased, and most foxes are killed when barely mature. Thus hunting greatly increases fox suffering not only because the method of killing is cruel in the extreme, but also because the death rate is unnaturally high. TERRY SESSFORD
Wincanton, Somerset

Sir: I live in a village with three fox hunts in the vicinity. I do not

support hunting or tear living sheep to pieces on Sunday. Nor do most of the other “squeamish town dwellers” in this particular village. We are unfortunately plagued with rabbits, which seem to have few predators these days. F. KAY
Weedon, Northamptonshire

Unfair to Hamilton

Sir: Your leading article (7 November) is right to point out that Neil Hamilton, although perceived to be unpopular, is entitled to a fair trial. That, he manifestly has not had. You have little to say, however, about the role of the press in the whole “sleaze” affair. An unrelenting campaign has been waged against Neil Hamilton and his wife, based upon the assumption that he was guilty of corruptly accepting payments from Mr Al Fayed. Had there been a proper ju-

dicial process, Mr Hamilton and Mr Al Fayed would both have had to answer questions on oath and any witnesses could have been cross-examined. Even more important, prejudicial pre-trial publicity would not have been permitted. MURIEL TURNER
(Baroness Turner of Camden)
London NW6

Remembrance

Sir: Simon C Allen (Letters, 11 November) is entitled not to wear a Remembrance Day poppy but I wonder whether he has ceased to mark Christmas and Easter (and possibly his own birthday) simply because he “cannot turn back and remember a time I did not know”. JOHN DOUCH
Wellingborough, Northamptonshire

Sir: At the age of 43, I also have many reasons to remember the

Second World War. The reason I wear a poppy is to not only remember those who died during that war but also those who died during the Falklands war, the Gulf war and Bosnia for the sake of freedom. In years to come, there will be further wars, and those that suffer during these wars also have a right to be remembered. JAN GREEP
Stockbridge, Hampshire

American justice

Sir: There is no essential difference between a Massachusetts jury being influenced by the feelings of the Eappens, a Saudi court taking notice of the opinions of nurse Gifford's family and a British Home Secretary being swayed by the anger of James Bulger's parents. If justice needs her blindfold, she needs it everywhere. P J STEWART
Oxford

Early Baconians

Sir: The most effective form of censorship is for the orthodox believer to label heretics as snobs, self-advertisers, or lunatics. Shakespeare is such a sacred myth in England that all discussion of the authorship is habitually killed in this manner. Thus Terry Eagleton cannot resist the tired old jibes at “Looney” Oxfordians and mad Baconians called Bacon in his review of *The Genius of Shakespeare* (1 November).

However, he is wrong in suggesting that nobody questioned Shakespeare's identity until 200 years after his death. The identity of many writers in that era was regularly disputed by contemporaries such as Robert Greene, Thomas Nashe and Thomas Puttenham, and Shakespeare was no exception. In 1597 Joseph Hall published *Virgidentiae*, in which he identified the author of “Venus and Adonis” and other early works as someone he called “Labeo”, who passed them off as someone else's.

A year later in his *Pigmalion's Image and Certain Saitres* John Marston identified “Labeo” as “mediocria firma”, which was Francis Bacon's family motto. Even H N Gibson, who accepts the orthodox theory, acknowledges that “Marston believed that Hall meant Bacon as the author and ‘Venus and Adonis’ as the poem”.

Incidentally, the Baconian theory was first directly suggested by the Rev James Wilmot about 1785, which is still less than 200 years. BRIAN MCCLINTON
Lisburn, Co Antrim

Beards good and bad

Sir: Nicholas Schoon's defence of beards (11 November) seems to miss the point that some people look good wearing a beard, others do not.

Wild, unkempt fur is fine on eccentric university professors and trawler skippers but perhaps not so on a neurosurgeon.

All my female friends agree that Sean Connery looks even more rugged and handsome behind a coating of grey fuzz. Bad beards are those fuzzy, manicured affairs. Take a close look at Jeremy Beadle if you disagree. SEAN MALYON
Stamford, Lincolnshire

Passports, canal boats and Afrikaans – a moral maze of modern fables



MILES KINGTON

Today I bring you three cautionary fables for our time.

1. Once upon a time there was a frequent business flyer who loved doing all the things that frequent business flyers do, such as collecting Air Miles, watching stupid in-flight films instead of sleeping and buying unnecessary things in Duty Free at the same price he could have got them elsewhere. He enjoyed life as a frequent business flyer.

The one thing he regretted was not having an old-style big blue British passport. When his passport had come up for renewal, he had got one of the first of the new little claret EU things. He was so resentful of this that he had had his old passport made into a passport

holder for the new horrible little pink thing, and when he went abroad he would put his little valid passport into his big old invalid one.

One day he was travelling to Canada and he presented his big blue passport for passport inspection.

“There's no passport in here,” said the official. “I think you'll find there's a small red one inside,” said the frequent business flyer smugly.

“I think not.” He looked. The man was absolutely right. He had forgotten to put his new passport inside his old one. This meant he had to go home to get his passport, and that meant he missed his flight and had to get a later one. As luck would

have it, the flight he missed landed safely in Canada and everyone on board was saved. But the flight he was forced to take crashed on take-off. There were no survivors.

MORAL: Even if the plane you take doesn't leave the country, you should still have your passport with you for identification in the aftermath.

2. Once upon a time there was a man who lived on a canal boat with his family, and did everything that an ideal citizen should do. He saved energy by using a wind-powered generator. He saved petrol by cycling to and from the boat. His wife taught the children at home on the boat and took some strain off the schools. By using herbal remedies from the fields and

woods they never fell ill and never bothered the NHS. But when it came to general election time, he found that neither he nor his wife was allowed to vote.

“You see, you haven't got a fixed abode,” said the election official at the town hall. “You've got to have a fixed abode.”

“Why?”

“Because those are the rules.”

“Because we have to know that every voter actually lives in the constituency he intends to vote in.”

“But I do live here.”

“Ah yes, but you can't guarantee that you won't move your boat before the election,

can you? You might cast off and go down the canal to another constituency and register there and vote there as well. That wouldn't be fair to people with only one vote, would it?”

“Yes, but it won't be fair to me if I can't have any vote at all, will it?”

“I'm sorry about that, sir,” said the official, “but I suppose that's the price you pay for being a floating voter.”

MORAL: You may be a model citizen, and you may have a real grievance against the laws of the country, but it won't stop bureaucrats from making stupid jokes.

3. Once upon a time there was a young man from South Africa living in London who overheard two people in the

London Underground discussing a trip that one of them had made to South Africa.

“I didn't like it at all,” said the person. “The Afrikaners are so rude and unfriendly. The natives go into a shell when they see the colour of your skin. It's dirty and dangerous in the middle of Johannesburg and you can't even go out at night. I'm glad to be back. I can tell you.”

The young South African was so furious at this unfair description of his country that he was about to intervene, when he heard two other passengers talking in Afrikaans tolerably well.

“I don't know why people like London,” one was saying. “I hate it here. Everyone is so

rude and offensive. Even if they might be nice to you, they clam up when they hear your South African accent.”

“And it's bloody dirty and bloody dangerous,” said the other.

“Especially at night. I can't wait to get back to Cape Town.”

The young man, who had been listening to their conversation and who came from Cape Town himself, felt all warm inside at the thought that there were two people like him on the same train in London. He turned round and would probably have greeted them had he not realised in time that they were both black.

MORAL: You could always try talking Welsh.

Forget the CBI, watch the market signals



**HAMISH
MCRAE**
BUSINESS AND
GOVERNMENT

Business everywhere is becoming more important, so how should we make sure that the voice of business is conveyed accurately to government?

Two equally unsatisfactory approaches to this problem are on display this week. One is the Formula One model. Here the politicians accept a lot of money from the business in question, then their policies to suit its interests while insisting that there is utterly no connection between the cash and the policy - and then give the money back in case anyone thinks there was.

The other is the CBI model. Here the key grandees of business get together and decide on a policy, in this case that European Monetary Union is basically a good idea. They then stand up at a grand annual conference and say so, only to find that other key grandees think it isn't a such good idea at all, and they also stand up and put the opposite line. The disagreement then stirs up a string of anti-CBI comment, with people pointing out that it happens to be German and Irish grandees that think it is great idea for Britain to join EMU, while the British ones are altogether more circumspect.

There is a deeper problem here, which is that the business world has become much more fragmented than it was even 10 years ago, so that creating a mechanism to represent its interests is virtually impossible. We have the CBI which is competently run and does as a good job as it can representing big business. But the big companies that dominate it are becoming less and less important as a source of employment in this country. Companies such as British Airways or Barclays Bank are, busy cutting their labour-forces. That is not a criticism; merely an observation that big business everywhere is involved in a ferocious drive to cut costs and that means killing jobs.

By contrast, job creation in this country comes entirely from tiny companies, the sort of companies that make Formula One cars or supply services to the business. If you run a firm with half a dozen employees you are not going to want to spend time on a CBI committee, even if that was your idea of fun.

There are other organisations that represent small business. There is the Institute of Directors, for example, which usually takes the opposite line to the CBI. But it is more of a club, with posh premises on Pall Mall, and a service industry (conferences, a magazine, meeting rooms, etc.) than a lobbying body. There are various other bodies that try to represent small business, and there are the Chambers of Commerce, but it is very difficult for them to convey a clear signal: there is too much background noise.

There are an amazing number of small businesses in this country. Back in 1980 there were 2.4 million small businesses in total in Britain. Now there are more than 3.7 million, though that is down a touch from the peak

of the 1980s boom. Companies with fewer than 50 employees employ nearly 10 million people, of which 2.9 million are self-employed. Where these people have a collective interest in an industry their interests can be protected by an energetic champion, with access to the corridors of power. A meeting at Number 10 and, hey presto, policy changes.

There are still dangers lurking even when there are such champions. The fragmented fine arts business in London is in danger of losing business to New York if the government agrees to an EU rule that it has to apply VAT on the auction trade. But at least there are powerful people in the sale-rooms who can convey the warning to government, pointing out that the Treasury will actually lose revenue, not gain it, if it drives the trade offshore.

But those are exceptions. Most small businesses do not have powerful champions. Not only is there no Federation for Creators of Web Pages on the Internet, but there is no Mr Internet (as there is a Mr Formula One and a Mr Unilever and a Mr BMW) who can hob-nob at Number 10. We have structures that represent big business in a world where power is shifting to small business.

So what is to be done? Well, I know what is not to be done, which is to create some additional formal mechanism for trying to convey the views of business to the government. The sort of people who want to sit on committees are not the people who matter in small businesses: people who are any good are too busy doing their jobs.

No, I suggest that government should not listen to what business people say but watch what they do. The market will signal pretty fast if government adopts a business-unfriendly policy. Do not over-plan, but respond very quickly to market signals.

This is the strategy of the City of London. There has been no long-term plan that sought to make the City the largest producer of international financial services in the world. We have not bribed foreign banks to locate in London, as we have the Koreans to set up plants in South Wales; yet there are more banks here than any other place on earth and we seem, if anything, to be gaining market share in financial services, rather than losing it. Whoever there is a threat, there has to be an immediate response: a good example was the "ring of steel" round the City in response to IRA bomb attacks.

This must be the right response to the needs of business. Do not waste energy having long meetings with people who claim to represent business, for they will represent the interests of - if not large business, certainly existing business. Instead, watch with lidless eyes what is happening to small business creation and employment. Do not worry if business people moan, for everyone whinges these days. But if they start to shut down or lay off staff, or simply don't start businesses in the first place, move like the wind to find out why and correct the policy that has caused the problem. Policies which cannot easily be reversed (such as EMU membership) need to be approached with particular caution.

This is a whole new world for politicians. Politicians are used to bureaucracies, to structures, to meetings. To deal with the growing, new businesses politicians have to behave not like bureaucrats but like entrepreneurs. They have to create policies, test them on the market and see if they walk off the shelves. They have to accept that they will make mistakes and if they have a diffidence, change it fast. Being business-friendly is not the same as being friendly with business people, for it is the business people of the future who hold the key to the success of economies, not those who have already made their pile.



Public exposure: Louise Woodward and her hometown supporters face the world on the small screen

Sky News

When justice is seen to be done



**SUZANNE
MOORE**
EMOTIONS
ON TRIAL

It's difficult to know what to pin on your chest lately. Instead of wearing a poppy for a couple of days, people now seem to wear them for about three weeks. Next to that you can pin your yellow ribbon for Louise Woodward, a pink one for breast cancer awareness and your old Aids ribbon. You can if you so desire add a caterpillar to show that you haven't forgotten what happened to Matthew Eappen. How much more room is there to show that you care? Well, it depends how big your chest is. The symbols of caring and remembering have got out of hand. Poppies and yellow ribbons? Are they really interchangeable?

Some would say that much has got out of hand concerning the whole Woodward case. The inhabitants of Elton emoting furiously in front of the cameras, regulars of The Rigger forming themselves into an amateur dramatics society, one minute sobbing, the next clenching at each other.

Obviously everyone in Elton shares the view that Louise is innocent and they will stay in that pub until the rest of the world recognises that they are

right. It should be pointed out that anyone who stays in a pub as long as these people have is most likely to be not just a little tired and emotional but completely inebriated. An American cameraman told me last week of his shock at the amount of underage drinking in Elton and the way that the campaign consists of getting the beers in at 10 in the morning.

Not to put too fine a point on it, the inhabitants of Elton are not debating issues of justice and morality; they are doing what we Brits excel at, they are having a piss-up. Given the circumstances, a dead child, a convicted child-killer, a media circus, this may all be profoundly tasteless and inappropriate. But just let us remind ourselves of a couple of things here. The pub crowd in Elton are not the entire population of Britain, most of whom seem to feel that a manslaughter verdict is the right one. The "mob mentality" of Elton actually belongs to less than a hundred people. The idea of Woodward coming back to Britain as a heroine strikes most of us as absurd.

Pictures of hysterical women groping the local vicar, greed up by the constant presence of Sky News, should show that while we routinely accuse American culture of being cheap and tacky, we can beat them at their own game. This is unfortunate because the original impulse that sparked this campaign - that Woodward did not deserve a sentence of 15 years - slid away by day into gross hyperbole. The supposed list of people who have written to the campaigners offering Woodward an air job is further evidence of a lapse of judgement. Whatever one may think of the girl, one might imagine she should at least try a new line of work.

Some commentators have

seen the whole sorry spectacle as a sign that we have lost our minds, that the age of reason has been overtaken by a headlong rush into the irrational, the emotional, the hysterical "feminisation" of Britain that is inevitably bad. This new mood is as bewildering to the old guard as The X-Files. Emotions are the alien invaders that are turning our citizens into media zombies.

As I said last week, expressing feelings is not the same thing as understanding them. We are still in a transitional period, surprised at our own capacity to be open about what we feel. If there is a sense of permission for this brought about by a new government and Diana's death, it doesn't mean that all these emotions will automatically be noble and generous. Indeed some of the feelings that have surfaced during this trial - a knee-jerk anti-Americanism, an innate belief in the superiority of the British way of doing things - have served to remind us what a small-minded and petty nation we are.

Likewise some of the American reactions have been completely out of all proportion to what we understand to be the facts of the case. Jay Leno's quip that now O.J. Simpson will have a new golfing buddy is just plain ridiculous. Yet the anxieties that fuelled the huge public interest in the case do not appear to me particularly irrational. For once the issue of when looks after the children, of how working women manage has become media-sensory. Most debates on childcare are seen as dull and worthy. Suddenly that great unseen part of many women's lives - their compromises, their heartaches, their temporary solutions to the problem of childcare - is now seen as a matter of public interest. All of us who have left

our children with paid carers say in each other that we are not shocked that this baby has died, but that more of them don't.

This making public of what is normally hidden has repercussions. Indeed much of the discussion around this case has to do with what should be made public information and what should not. Deborah Eappen's style of mothering has been on trial, and her decision to make public pictures of her dying baby was seen as the last straw.

We would also prefer not to see trials televised, or so we are told continually by the great and the good. It debases the legal system. We were, of course, told the same thing about putting cameras in the House of Commons. Old Britain was in many ways a closed society. Much decision-making went on behind closed doors. How though, can we argue for greater openness, greater accountability if we are prepared to keep so much secret? Putting TV cameras in courtrooms can mean appealing to the lowest common denominator, yet putting TV cameras in pubs full of people watching televised trials is deemed somehow acceptable. This is pure hypocrisy.

The American justice system has its flaws, as does ours, but we have seen justice to be done, in that whatever mistakes were made have been rectified

far more quickly than if the case had been heard here. Allowing citizens to watch the legal system at work, to make up their minds, entails a certain amount of trust. Some people will go bonkers in village pubs, some will shrug their shoulders and wonder what all the fuss is about, some will enjoy discussing juicy judicial issues and some will ignore it all.

The alternative to trial by television is trial by tabloid. This is actually the medium that simplifies; television on the other hand shows the long hours taken up by the presentation of complicated information, it shows that everything is not black and white. There are costs involved in allowing the general public to have more access to and more information about the legal system - greater openness carries risks.

Yet for every sentimental view that has been expressed about Woodward there exists, I'm sure, a more sober analysis of what really went on behind the closed doors of the Eappen household. In fact Judge Zobel is just that and one day when they get back home from the pub, even Woodward's most ardent supporters may in private have to acknowledge that the party is over, that the TV crews have gone home and that there is no one left to watch them staring in a drama of their own making.

Handling Saddam: lessons from the First World War



**PATRICK
COCKBURN**
SANCTIONS
ON IRAQ

In dealing with Iraq since the Gulf war the UN is in the same position - and faces the same difficulties - as France and Britain trying to enforce the provisions of the treaty of Versailles after the end of the First World War.

The victorious Allies tried to limit the size of the German army to 100,000 men and stop it possessing tanks, heavy artillery, aircraft, poison gas or a general staff. Similarly, the United Nations Special Commission (Unscm) has spent six years trying to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction - nuclear, bi-

nological and chemical - and the means to deliver them.

The UN in Iraq is failing now for the same reason as the Allies in Germany failed in the 1920s. Both the First World War and the Gulf war ended in armistices. In the first case, the Allied armies did not set foot on German territory. In the second, they crossed only a few kilometres into Iraq.

In both cases, the agreements that ended the conflict could be enforced only with the co-operation of the defeated state, which was bound to wait for a suitable opportunity to throw off the shackles on its sovereignty. The only real surprise in the present crisis with Iraq is that this has been so long coming.

The analogy goes further. Versailles could only last so long as the Allies were prepared to restart the war to enforce it. Otherwise they had to negotiate. The US and its Gulf war allies are now in the same position. Are they willing to restart the Gulf war in order to enforce the provisions that ended it? Saddam Hussein is betting that they are not.

Lesser military action will not do. Last year the Iraqi leader sent his tanks into Ar-

bil, the Kurdish capital, in a surprise intervention in the Kurdish civil war. For six years the US, France and Britain had been flying air-patrols over Kurdistan whose unstated purpose was to deter any such Iraqi action. When it finally came, President Clinton - facing re-election - fired missiles at targets 500 miles to the south of Arbil. American television viewers were impressed by their government's resolution as they watched the missiles launched, but to Iraqis, both the government and its opponents, the affair was a demonstration of American impotence.

The Iraqi leadership has already calculated the odds. For several years, it has debated its response to arms inspectors. Some Iraqis, including Tariq Aziz, the deputy prime minister, argued in the past (ironically he is now the spokesman for the opposite view) that if Iraq played fair with Unscm then sanctions would end. Others, notably Uday, the son of Saddam Hussein, and his newspaper *Babil*, said that the US was determined to maintain sanctions whether Iraq gave up its strategic weapons or not. When Iraq said on 29 October that it was going to expel the

American inspectors belonging to Unscm, it showed that Saddam Hussein had finally decided that Uday and other Iraqi leaders who thought like him were right.

There were other calculations involved. Iraq was clearly encouraged by signs of "sanctions fatigue" in the world in general and particularly in Paris, Moscow and Peking. American influence has ebbed a little in the Arab world because of its failure to broker an Israeli-Palestinian agreement since the Oslo accords in 1993. It may even be that Unscm was about to unearth some Iraqi weaponry.

In the past 18 months, unnoticed by the outside world, there has been a significant power shift within Iraq. Since he re-entered Kurdistan last year the Iraqi leader has started to re-establish his power in his three northern Kurdish provinces from which he withdrew in 1991. He forced the evacuation of one of the largest CIA networks in the world, in the biggest defeat for the agency since the Bay of Pigs. A little earlier a CIA-backed military coup was unmasked in Baghdad and its leaders shot.

These developments gave

Saddam Hussein confidence. Obviously there is no comparison between the military forces he has available and those of the US. During the Gulf war, Iraqi anti-aircraft fire was almost wholly ineffective against allied aircraft and missiles. The Iraqi leader has 450,000 men and 800-1,000 modern T-72 tanks, but his most important asset is that he probably will not face a renewal of the Gulf conflict.

Much will depend on how Saddam plays his hand. In 1980, when he invaded Iran, and in 1990, when he invaded Kuwait, he mistook a short-term tactical advantage for a real change in the balance of power in the region. His judgement of domestic Iraqi politics is acute, but he often misinterprets how the world will react to his moves.

In the present confrontation he will be on strong ground if he tries to make concrete but limited gains. The political status quo of 1991 is looking tattered, but it is not yet on its death bed. A few missiles will not impress the Iraqi leader. A full-scale bombardment of Iraqi power stations and oil refineries might do so, but such a prolonged attack could not be

launched without an international political consensus similar to that which existed before the Gulf war.

"We reject any promises or sweet words," said the Baghdad daily *Babil* yesterday, "unless they are stated in an official and clear document which guarantees two demands: neutrality of inspection teams and setting a time frame for lifting the embargo." It is unlikely that Iraq will allow Unscm to return without some progress on these fronts.

President Clinton is playing it cautiously. No doubt there is plenty of support in the US for punishing Saddam Hussein. He is the one remaining card-carrying demon - with the possible exception of Fidel Castro - in the American political conomy. But this support might change if the US forces start suffering casualties.

The political status quo of 1991 in the Middle East can no more be maintained indefinitely than that of 1919 in Europe. It would be better to arrange for its orderly demise - and a new relationship between Iraq and the outside world - than to pretend that the accords that ended the Gulf War can be kept alive indefinitely.

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McGregor: a restless, inquisitive and highly original mind

Lord McGregor of Durris

Oliver Ross McGregor, social scientist, born Durris, Kincardineshire 25 August 1921; Assistant Lecturer and Lecturer in Economic History, Hull University 1945-47; Lecturer, Bedford College, London University 1947-50; Simon Senior Research Fellow, Manchester University 1950-54; Reader, London University 1960-64; Professor of Social Institutions, London University 1964-85; Head of Department of Sociology, Bedford College, London University 1964-77; Fellow, Wolfson College, Oxford 1972-75; Chairman, Royal Commission on Press 1975-77; created Baron McGregor of Durris 1978; Chairman, Advertising Standards Authority 1980-90; Chairman, Press Complaints Commission 1991-94; married 1944 Nell Weate (three sons); died London 10 November 1997.

Lord McGregor was one of the last exemplary figures in that great tradition of post-war British social scientists who followed the vocations of scholarship and public service with equal ease and distinction.

The son of a Scottish tenant farmer, he enlisted as a gunner at the start of the Second World War before being seconded to the War Office and the Ministry of Agriculture. After demobilisation he graduated with first-class honours in Economic History from the London School of Economics and taught briefly at Hull before his appointment to a lectureship at Bedford College in 1947.

"Mac" McGregor went on to serve at Bedford College as

Reader in Social Institutions from 1960 to 1964, and as Professor from 1964 to 1985, retiring shortly after Bedford was incorporated with Royal Holloway College. As Head of Department between 1964 and 1977 he recruited and led a cadre of outstanding scholars, particularly in the fields of socio-legal studies and medical sociology. In addition he was an outstanding, able and authoritative Chairman of the Board of Studies and the Board of Examiners in Social Policy and Administration.

McGregor was a man of prodigious intellectual energy and enthusiasm. In addition to his engagements in London University during the 1970s he was elected to a Fellowship of Wolfson College, and served as Director of the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies in Oxford University, where he initiated a series of major inter-collegiate research projects involving London, Bristol and the Oxford Centre.

In his first major work, *Divorce in England* (1957), he undertook a critical analysis of the findings of the Morton Commission, and set out a number of cogent and radical proposals for the reform of the divorce laws. His next major, co-authored work, *Separated Spouses* (1970), was the first nationally representative survey of the jurisdiction of magistrates' courts over matrimonial and the illegitimate child. Its findings and recommendations made a significant contribution to the debate about family law and its subsequent reform.

As a member of the Select Committee on One-Parent Families, McGregor played a

key role in the sponsoring of research and in drafting the final report (Finer Report, 1974) with the late Sir Morris Finer. Their joint monograph, *The History of the Obligation to Maintain*, was a masterly historical analysis of the changing relationship between the development of the poor law and family law relating to the treatment of illegitimate children in England during the 19th century.

From the 1970s onwards McGregor wrote numerous articles on issues of social and legal reform including his contributions to such distinguished lecture programmes as the James Seth Memorial, the Macabean in Jurisprudence, the Tom Olsen and the Hamlyn series. He combined these academic activities with continuous service as a member of committees on subjects such as the Enforcement of Judgement Debts, Statutory Maintenance Limits and Land Use, and as President of the National Council for One-Parent Families and the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux.

Throughout his long career he sought both to extend the frontiers of scholarship in his fields of enquiry and to apply research findings to central issues of social reform and public service. In this respect he stands as a distinguished, representative figure in a tradition of British "blue-book" social science which has its origins in the great reform movements of 19th-century social policy.

Self-regulation in the fields of advertising and the press were, taken together, the second of McGregor's abiding interests. He was a doughty and indefatigable defender of press

freedom. After the death of Sir Morris Finer in 1975 he was appointed Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Press. The Commission's Report of 1977 set out an authoritative statement of the institutional preconditions for freedom of the press, including the reform of the then Press Council. From 1977 onwards, he served as Chairman of Reuter's Founders' Share Company and in 1990 he was appointed as the first Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission.

The Report of the Royal Commission on the Press had emphasised the close institutional and financial connections between newspapers and the advertising industry. McGregor's involvement in the management of advertising followed logically from his commitment to the principles of freedom and self-regulation of the press in commercial activity. During his ten years of outstanding service as Chairman of the Advertising Standards Authority from 1980 to 1990 he played a key role in the revision of that industry's codes of practice in protecting the public interest and in dealing with complaints.

By this time his achievements were already recognised in his election to an Honorary Fellowship at the LSE in 1977 and the conferment of an honorary degree by Bristol University in 1986. In 1978 he was created a Labour life peer, and he subsequently served in the House of Lords as an active reforming cross-bencher.

McGregor's three years as Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission were, at times, fraught with controversy.

The Commission was rocked by a series of high-profile press revelations about the private lives of the Prince and Princess of Wales, culminating in the publication of Andrew Morton's book on Princess Diana. The future of self-regulation was very much in doubt. It is easy now to look back with the benefit of hindsight and point to some tactical errors of judgement on the Commission's part. Nevertheless on the key issues of principle and strategy McGregor got it right. He ensured that the industry wrote, endorsed and gave total support to a code of practice that the Commission administered. He steered the Commission through its hazardous early years and restored the credibility of press self-regulation. The newspaper industry owes him an incalculable debt.

The best epitaph to this remarkable man is that, in his death as in his life, it is impossible to imagine him ever resting in peace or wishing to do so. He had a restless, inquisitive and highly original mind. His command of 19th-century social history and understanding of legal process were memorably impressive. He loved the cut and thrust of academic and political argument. His conversation sparkled with anecdote and wit. His friendship was staunch and his many discreet acts of kindness and consideration will be remembered by all who cared for him.

In his last few years, with the constant and loving support of his wife, Nell, Oliver McGregor stoically battled against encroaching ill-health. Together with their three sons they were a great family partnership.

— Robert Finkler

Carson Smith

Carson Raymond Smith, bass player, composer and arranger, born San Francisco 9 January 1931; died Las Vegas 2 November 1997.

Playing the bass in a jazz group is often a thankless, almost anonymous job. Carson Smith leapt to fame in the Fifties on the coast talk of the baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan. He was a key member of the Gerry Mulligan Quartet in 1952, and no doubt learnt a lot about composition and arranging from the leader. Because Mulligan was unique in choosing to abandon the piano, the role of the double bass became crucial in supporting the front line, which consisted of his baritone and the trumpet of Chet Baker.

There will always be discussion over whether or not Gerry Mulligan's self-esteem was justified by his enormous contribution to jazz. Even before the success of the quartet he had been unusually arrogant. He hired and fired

sidemen with ruthless efficiency and was not averse to taking revenge. When the drummer Frank Isola resigned from his group in Los Angeles to join Stan Getz, Mulligan left the city and drove off for the East with Isola's drum kit still in the boot of his car.

Mulligan was cavalier about rewriting jazz history when it suited him. "Carson Smith was the original bass player," he said of the quartet. In fact Bob Whitlock had preceded Smith in the band by a number of months.

By the time Smith took over from Whitlock the band had already enjoyed huge success with "Bernie's Tune", one of the first jazz records to be a hit with record buyers at large. "Bernie's Tune" also established West Coast jazz in the public eye as a distinct style.

The quartet followed up with other successful originals, but Smith was responsible for creating his next biggest hit. "Being an arranger, a lot of the good ideas in the early quartet were Carson's," said Mulligan.

"The idea of doing 'My Funny Valentine' with that moving bass line that makes the arrangement his." "My Funny Valentine" was unique in using the members of the quartet to sing a cappella behind Chet Baker's trumpet.

At the height of the quartet's success, Mulligan was imprisoned at the Sheriff's Honor Farm for three months for drug offences, and Stan Getz replaced him temporarily in the quartet. But there had been difficulties over money. Following the success of "My Funny Valentine" Baker was now a star in his own right. Mulligan refused to give him any more money and the trumpeter left in 1953 to form his own quartet, taking Carson Smith with him.

Baker had severe narcotics problems which dominated his whole life, and his quartet was made stable by his pianist Russ Freeman. But when Baker decided to take the band to Europe in 1955 Freeman and Smith thought the time had come to leave, and they stayed

in Los Angeles where they formed a trio.

Whilst with Baker Smith also took on freelance jobs, and one of them in 1954 gave him the opportunity to record with Clifford Brown, one of the most gifted of all the jazz trumpeters. Less than a year later Brown was killed in a car accident at the age of 25. Smith also recorded with Charlie Parker and played with Billie Holiday in her Carnegie Hall concert of 1956. Smith was particularly proud of an album which he recorded with Harpo Marx during this period.

Chico Hamilton had been the original drummer in Mulligan's quartet and in 1955 he asked Carson Smith to join his extraordinary and radical quintet. Mulligan had started a fashion for what might be described as chamber music jazz, and Hamilton followed it up with a vengeance. His quintet consisted of a flautist who doubled on saxophone, cello, guitar, double bass and drums. The music lacked the cutting edge of most jazz, but this gave it an

appeal to listeners to classical music. Fred Katz was a conventional cellist and a key member of the group with whom Smith worked very closely. The gentle music which resulted didn't have the success that Mulligan's had had, but none the less it became very popular and the band recorded the soundtrack music for the film *The Sweet Smell of Success* (1957).

Smith left Hamilton the same year to freelance in Los Angeles, although he returned to the quintet on occasion and recorded with it in 1959. That same year he toured and recorded with Stan Kenton Orchestra, and then joined Charlie Barnet's band.

In 1962 Smith moved to Las Vegas, where the casinos were providing plentiful work for jazz musicians. He joined the sextet led by the trumpeter Charlie Teagarden at the Silver Slipper, which also included the eminent trombonist Bill Harris. The band recorded in 1962 and in 1963 made an album with the vibraphone player Lionel Hampton, who was

working at a nearby casino.

In 1964, after touring Japan with the George Auld Orchestra, Carson Smith was reunited with Gerry Mulligan for a concert at the Hollywood Bowl. After working with small groups for almost 20 years Buddy Rich relaunched his big band, tagged the Swingin' New Band, in September 1966. Smith was the bassist and played on the remarkable first album which the band recorded live at the Cheez Club in Hollywood. The album recharged Rich's career but Smith soon returned to freelancing.

Carson Smith had taken up the bass in junior high school when he was 13. His time and choice of notes marked him as a great player and by the time of his heyday in the Fifties he was one of the best soloists on the instrument. But he was also notable for his sensitive accompaniment work and was a master of the "walking" bass style. He continued to freelance in Las Vegas until shortly before he died.

— Steve Voce



A master of the 'walking' bass style: Smith (right) with Gerry Mulligan in the Gerry Mulligan Quartet

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS
BLACKWELL: John, editor *ezemond*, died in Chatham on Bouffie Night 1997. Service at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, Chatham, 3pm, Friday 14 November. No flowers, donations to British Heart Foundation or to Trinity Hospice may be sent to his wife, Pamela Blackwell (Price), at his home. A memorial service will be announced later.

For Gazette, telephone 01753 282. Charges are £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
The Queen, Patron, attends a concert, dedicated to the memory of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, at the Royal Academy of Music and the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, at the Royal Festival Hall, London SW1, 10.30pm. The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, attends a reception at the Royal Festival Hall, London SW1, 10.30pm. The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, attends a reception at the Royal Festival Hall, London SW1, 10.30pm. The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, attends a reception at the Royal Festival Hall, London SW1, 10.30pm.

BIRTHDAYS
Dame Peggy Fenner, former MP, 75; Lord Goff of Chieveley, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 71; Dr William Hayes, President, St John's College, Oxford, 67; Miss Kim Hunter, actress, 75; Mr John Lagan, editor, *Dictionary of British Visitors to Italy in the 18th Century*, 63; Sir Peter Lloyd MP, 60; Miss Jennifer Page, chief executive, Millennium Commission, 33; Miss Stephanie Powers, actress, 54; Professor Gilbert Smith, Vice-Chancellor, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, 53; Miss Jo Stafford, singer, 79; Sir William Sutherland, former chief constable, Lothian and Borders Police, 64; Professor John Barrant, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Huddersfield University, 56; Prebendary Chad Vaux, founder of the Samaritans, 86; Mr Neil Young, rock singer and guitarist, 51.

Anniversaries
Births: Richard Baxter, Puritan minister, scholar and writer, 1615; Edward Vernon "Old Grog", Admiral, 1684; Jacques-Alexandre César Charles, physicist and inventor, 1746; Mrs Amelia Opie (Amelia Alderson), novelist, 1769; Alexander Porfirovich Borodin, composer, 1833; François-Auguste Rodin, sculptor, 1840; Princess Grace of Monaco (Grace Patricia Kelly), 1929. Deaths: Pope Boniface VIII, 1303; Canute (the Great), King of England and Denmark, 1035; Thomas Fairfax, third Baron Fairfax of Cameron, Parliamentary army Commander-in-Chief, 1671; Charles Kemble, actor, 1854; Mrs Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, novelist, 1865; Emma Magdalena Rosalia Marie Josepha Barbara, Baroness Orczy, novelist, 1947. On this day: John Bunyan, writer, was arrested for preaching without a licence, 1660; the Battle of Sheriffmuir was fought between Jacobites and

LAW REPORT: 12 NOVEMBER 1997

Particular social group not created by employment

The expression "particular social group" in article 1A(2) of the Geneva Convention on the status of refugees did not ordinarily cover a body of people linked only by the work which they did.

Secretary of State for the Home Department v Oudine, Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hoffmann, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Mummery) 7 November 1997

The Court of Appeal allowed the Home Secretary's appeal against a determination of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal that Mrs Hafsa Oudine, an Algerian citizen, qualified for asylum because she had well founded fear of persecution if she were returned to Algeria because of her membership of a particular social group, within the terms of article 1A(2) of the 1951 Geneva Convention on the status of refugees.

The respondent was employed by the Algerian Ministry of Health as a midwife, part of her duties being to advise about contraception. She claimed to be in danger from Islamic fundamentalist terror-

ists who were opposed to contraception. *Ian Burnett (Treasury Solicitor) for the Home Secretary; Charles Bloomer (Davis Blank Furniss, Manchester) for the respondent.*

Lord Justice Pill said that the Immigration Appeal Tribunal had, in effect, found the respondent to be a member of a particular social group within the meaning of article 1A(2) of the Geneva Convention, and that the group was to be defined by reference to the duties which each of them had to perform on behalf of their employer. One of those duties, which was essential to continued employment as a midwife, was to provide advice on contraception. The well founded fear of persecution arose because the Islamic fundamentalists were opposed to that duty being performed, and the authorities were unable to provide protection for the respondent.

It had been submitted for the Home Secretary that the expression "particular social group" did not cover groups of

employees sharing a common employer, or a common employment, or both in combination. In *Secretary of State for the Home Department v Savchenko* (1996) Imm App R 28, counsel had put forward the proposition that the other Convention reasons (race, religion, nationality and political opinion) reflected a civil or political status, and that "membership of a particular social group" should be interpreted *ejusdem generis*.

In *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, ex p Shah* (unreported, 23 July 1997), a revised formulation of that proposition had been adopted, ie: the Convention emphasises that the group must be a "particular" and "social" group. This means that the members of the group share something which unites them, and which sets them apart from the rest of society and is recognised as such by society generally.

The main point at issue in *ex p Shah* was the degree of cohesiveness required for a particular social group to exist, and a proposition was required to deal with that question. That

was not the critical factor in the present case. The people in the present case did have common interests which were identifiable, and by reason of their duties would be regarded as a distinct group for the purposes of employment. The issue was whether identity of interest in employment was sufficient to constitute a particular social group within article 1A(2).

While the proposition might have been stated too narrowly or in too condensed a form in *Savchenko*, the *ejusdem generis* principle did appear to have a part to play in the present context. That principle was not a rigid rule but an aid to construction, and the substance of the links required to constitute people as a "particular social group" must be considered in the context of the Convention and article 1A(2).

The Convention, as its preamble recited, was concerned with fundamental rights and freedoms. Whilst the "right to work" appeared as such a right in article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1948, it did not readily convert into a right of asylum for inability to do a specific job. The characteristic that defined the particular social group must, in situations such as the present, be one that the members should not be required to change because it was fundamental to their individual identities or conscience. Such a group must be one "whose members voluntarily associate for reasons so fundamental to their human dignity that they should not be forced to forsake the association" (see *Ward v Attorney General of Canada* [1993] 2 RCS 689).

Shared duties in midwifery did not come within that principle. The expression "particular social group" did not ordinarily cover a body of people linked only by the work they did. A common employment did not ordinarily have that impact upon individual identities or conscience which was necessary to constitute a particular social group within the meaning of the Convention. The appeal would be allowed.

— Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

[illegible]

**NOW YOU CAN DO IT
YOUR WAY!**

[illegible]

Allied considers spirits demerger to counter Diageo

Allied Domecq reacted yesterday to the threat from newly formed spirits giant Diageo by saying it was considering alliances with other drinks companies and might break itself up if it would help forge a deal.
Tom Stevenson, Financial Editor, heard the Beefeater gin to Dunkin' Donuts group's plans.

Sir Christopher Hogg, who joined Allied Domecq as chairman 18 months ago, said the retailing and spirits group was actively considering all its options, including the break-up if it rejected any last year. The recently announced merger of Grand Metropolitan and Guinness to form Diageo had changed the trading landscape for Allied, he said, and made the need for a tie-up with another spirits company more pressing. Speculation about an alliance with Seagram has swirled around the struggling group ever since Guinness and Grand-Met joined forces to create a

group with more than twice Allied's sales. Analysts believe the group has no option other than finding a strong partner to enable it to compete with Diageo's massive marketing muscle and global brands.

Diageo will have sales following the merger of 108 million cases a year, more than twice Allied's 47 million. Seagram, the third group, sells 41 million, with no other group reaching 30 million cases.

Sir Christopher said yesterday that a demerger of the spirits side from Allied's smaller pubs and fast-food franchising operations was not a necessary precursor to an alliance, but he admitted that it might be a "facilitator". He hinted at Allied's increasing warmth towards the idea of a demerger by saying: "The issue is more a matter of pragmatism than of principle".

Another development likely to encourage Allied to entertain a demerger is the expected abolition of advance corporation tax (ACT), which has so far acted as a serious disincentive to splitting the group up. Because Allied's spirits profits are largely made overseas, the group needs sizeable UK profits against which to offset its overseas tax

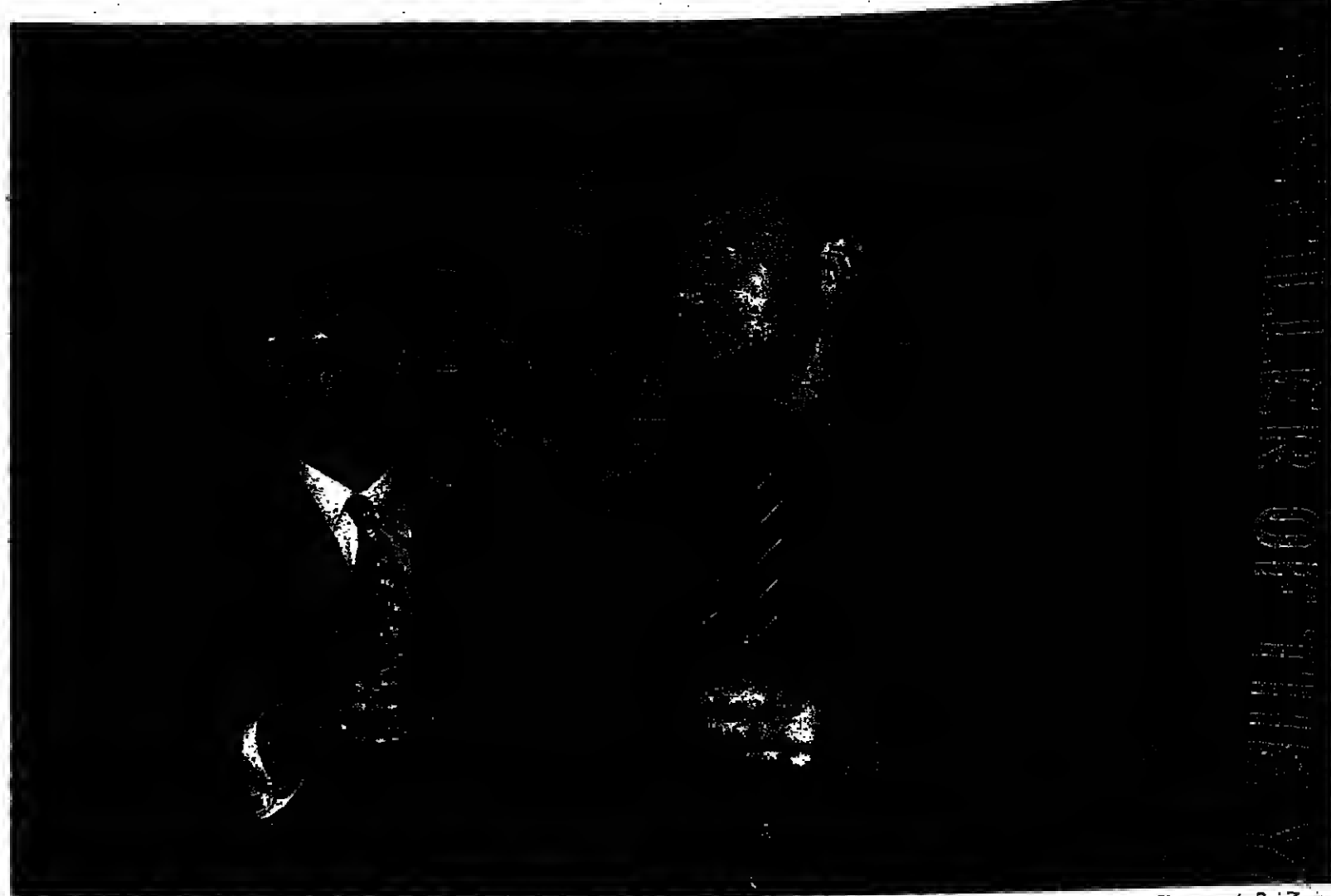
bill. Any abolition of ACT would eliminate that problem.

Allied's strategic options were outlined yesterday as the group announced better-than-expected results for the year to August. Profits before tax rose 6 per cent to £507m, while a lower tax charge boosted earnings per share by 18 per cent to 39.1p. Sir Christopher said the results marked a "turning point" for the group, which has underperformed the market and the rest of the sector for many years.

The realisation that things need to change is long overdue for many of Allied's increasingly frustrated investors. The company's shares have underperformed the market by 60 per cent over the past five years, trailing even its struggling peers by 30 per cent over that period. Yesterday they closed 27p higher at 508p as analysts focused on the mooted changes.

In keeping with its peers Allied has suffered from flat demand around the world for spirits but it is also perceived to have a worse portfolio of drinks than its main rivals and to have been poorly managed.

Analysts increased forecasts for the current year after the results announcement but said the



Thinking about drinks alliances: Tony Hales, Allied Domecq's chief executive (left), and Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman

Photograph: Rui Xavier

numbers were less important than yesterday's messages about the future direction of the group and its management. Sir Christopher gave his backing to the company's chief

executive, Tony Hales, and the finance director, Tony Trigg, who have come under mounting pressure from investors as the performance of Allied has lagged its rivals. Both are re-

turning to their head office roles.

At constant exchange rates, the spirits arm, which includes Ballantine's whisky, Beefeater gin and Kahlua among its

brands, saw profits rise 6 per cent last year. Margins rose from 15.5 to 16.3 per cent. After a £29m hit from sterling, trading profits fell 1 per cent to £414m, two thirds of the total.

In retailing, where brands include Victoria Wine, Firkin puts and the Baskin Robbins and Dunkin' Donuts franchises, profits rose 5 per cent to £232m. **Outlook, page 25**

Bank expected to raise rates again after inflation reaches two-year high

As one mortgage lender reacted yesterday to last week's rise in interest rates, disappointing inflation figures brought warnings that the Bank of England would have to get even tougher.
Diane Coyle and Michael Harrison report on the prospect of further increases in the cost of borrowing.

Headline inflation climbed to a two-year high last month, and the underlying measure moved further away from the Government's target, according to new figures published on the eve of the Bank of England's quarterly Inflation Report. Most City commentators predicted that the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will raise interest rates again to be sure of squeezing the economy enough to bring inflation back on course.

One leading economist warned business leaders gathered for the Confederation of British Industry's conference that the cost of borrowing might have to go as high as 8 per cent to choke off inflationary pressures. Gwyn Davies, chief international economist at Goldman Sachs, said there was no evidence that the breakneck economic growth was slowing,

that capacity utilisation was rising and skills shortages were spreading.

"I conclude from all this that the Bank was right to raise base rates last Thursday and that there is a strong case for further increases in base rates over the next six months," he said.

He was joined by other experts reacting to yesterday's disappointing figures. David Bloom of James Capel said: "The MPC will have little choice but to continue on a course of interest rate tightening."

At the CBI conference, the Prime Minister defended last week's quarter-point rise in base rates. Speaking via video link, Tony Blair said he knew it was hard to have interest rate rises and consequent pressure on the pound. But he added: "Better to have interest rate rises now - still at 7.25 per cent - than to go back to the early Nineties when they were at 15 per cent for a year."

Retail price inflation rose to 3.7 per cent last month, its highest since September 1995. With the September and October headline rates the most commonly used as a basis for pay claims in the all-important January round, analysts expressed concern that inflation approaching 4 per cent could lead to significantly higher pay settlements next year.

Figures due today on unemployment and average earnings will be eagerly scrutinised for any signs that the tight job market is already causing wage pressures.

The underlying measure of inflation, excluding mortgage interest payments, rose to 2.7 per cent in October, moving further away from its 2.5 per cent target.

The last round of mortgage increases explained part of the rise in the headline inflation rate. The housing component of the RPI was up 9.2 per cent in the year to October. But other prices, included within the target measure, picked up too. Food prices accounted for much of the increase, with vegetables such as mushrooms and cauliflowers up in price due to the weather. In addition, the prices of a range of services continued to accelerate. If the regulated utilities prices are excluded, inflation in the service sector was 4.3 per cent compared with 3.1 per cent in the same month last year.

Adair Turner, the director-general of the CBI, said he was convinced the actions being taken by the Government were the correct ones to ensure long-term economic stability. But the CBI stuck by its view that interest rates below 7.5 per cent were high enough to keep within the inflation target.

However, the weight of opinion, even among those who think it would be unnecessary, pointed towards further rate rises in the new year. This helped the pound rise yesterday, although sterling had already been boosted by a weak yen. It ended around two pence higher at DM2.91, and the sterling index climbed

Beckett hints at plans to tighten corporate governance

The Government yesterday dropped a heavy hint that it planned tougher corporate governance rules, going beyond the recommendations of the Hampel Committee. Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, said there was a view that the draft report published by Sir Ronnie Hampel, the chairman of ICI, "wasn't sufficiently strong

in some respects" and that measures were necessary to toughen and widen its remit.

Addressing the Confederation of British Industry's annual conference in Birmingham, Mrs Beckett said: "We want forms of governance and company law that encourage companies to invest and grow - to take the long-term strategic view and a broad

view of their obligations. They should also ensure openness and accountability not least in the relationship between shareholders and managers."

Advisers later played down suggestions that the Government was poised to legislate to oblige companies to invest more. But it was made clear that new statutory obligations, giving shareholders more power

were under consideration.

Mrs Beckett also took British industry to task for its poor performance in comparison to competitor nations. She said that companies had to benchmark their performance against the best in the world, not just the best in the UK. **— Michael Harrison**

Bupa set to make £240m cash bid for Care First

Bupa, the medical insurance giant, is today expected to launch a cash bid for Care First, the troubled nursing home company. A bid, likely to be pitched at around £240m, will come as a relief to Care First's long-suffering investors, reports Sameena Ahmad.

Bupa and Care First were last night locked in tense negotiations over the price of a takeover bid by the unquoted medical insurance company. According to industry sources, Bupa has offered 150p cash for each Care First share, valuing the company at £240.5m. However, Keith Bradshaw, Care First's controversial founder and chairman, has been asking for nearer 170p a share.

Bupa is understood to be ready to mount a hostile offer, likely to be today, if it cannot get agreement from the Care First board. It is not yet clear whether Mr Bradshaw, who was pressured to resign by institutions for driving out the company's chief executive, Chai Patel, in August, will take a position on Bupa's board. It is believed that Mr Bradshaw has not made such an appointment a condition of an agreed deal.

A bid at 150p would net Mr Bradshaw, who owns more than 7 per cent of Care First's shares, some £18m. A bid at this level would represent a 6 per cent premium to Care First's closing price of 141.5p yesterday, unchanged on the day. However, since Care First announced in late October that it was in talks which could lead to a bid, its shares have jumped from a 96.5p, five-year low, to reach 146p at one stage, though still well off the group's five-year high of 289p, struck at the end of 1993.

Schroders is advising Bupa while Care First is being advised by SBC Warburg Dillon Read. Bupa's intention to make a bid for Care First was first revealed by *The Independent* at the end of October. A spokesman for Bupa last night refused to comment, saying he would not speculate on rumours.

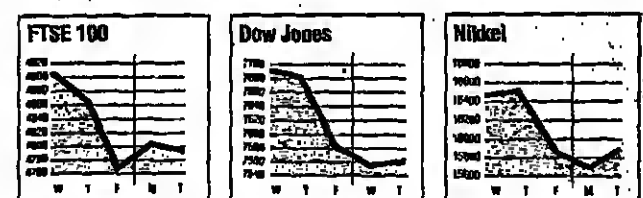
Buying Care First would add 135 nursing homes to Bupa's existing 76 homes, making it one of the UK's leading providers of integrated healthcare. Bupa has been aggressively buying up nursing home companies in the last year. In August it paid £76m to buy Goldborough Healthcare which owns 32 nursing homes and six private hospitals. Graham Smith, formerly chief executive of Goldborough, is managing director of Bupa's nursing homes business and may run the Care First portfolio.

Care First, under the leadership of Mr Bradshaw, has had a turbulent history. Mr Bradshaw was criticised for growing the company, initially called Takara before it merged with Mr Patel's Court Cavendish company last year, too quickly.

The company has also been criticised for overspending on building low-quality homes, without, for example, ensuite toilets. Care First's over-expansion hit occupancy levels at the homes when funding pressures on local authorities increased in the mid 1990s, forcing the company to reverse its strategy.

Mr Patel was brought in to run the newly merged company on the expectation that Mr Bradshaw would retire. However, Mr Bradshaw made it clear he wanted to keep hold of the reins, and Mr Patel found it increasingly difficult to work with him, resigning last August. Since then Mr Bradshaw has been under pressure to resign.

STOCK MARKETS



Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk High	52 wk Low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	4782.70	-13.10	-0.27	5367.80	3882.70	3.64
FTSE 250	4635.80	-5.20	-0.11	4963.80	4321.80	3.47
FTSE 350	2321.90	-6.80	-0.24	2570.50	1935.70	3.60
FTSE All Share	2275.74	-5.17	-0.23	2507.68	1930.89	3.58
FTSE SmallCap	2205.7	-0.90	-0.04	2407.40	2127.50	3.20
FTSE Biotech	1283.0	-1.30	-0.10	1346.50	1198.70	3.36
FTSE AIM	889.5	-3.30	-0.33	1158.00	865.90	1.03
Dow Jones	7577.39	25.25	0.34	8250.03	6219.82	1.78
Nikkei	15867.23	170.03	1.08	21480.57	15564.54	0.67
Hong Kong	10004.13	11.29	0.11	10820.21	8775.88	4.00
Dax	3731.08	-21.45	-0.57	4459.89	2726.25	2.14

INTEREST RATES

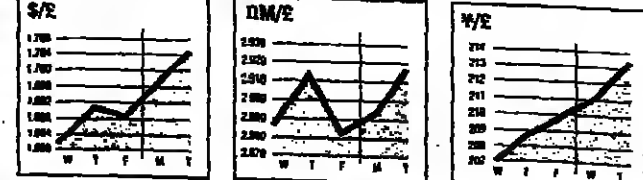


Money Market Rates	3 month	1 yr	1 yr swap	10 yr	10 yr swap	Long bond	1 yr swap
UK	7.83	1.25	7.88	1.00	6.67	6.55	-1.31
US	5.61	0.31	6.03	0.33	5.90	6.14	-0.30
Japan	0.51	0.01	0.56	-0.14	1.27	-0.96	-1.60
Germany	3.72	0.54	4.15	0.83	5.61	-0.28	-0.55

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Falls
Allied Domecq 508.00 27.00 5.61	Royal and Sun 547.00 -24.00 -4.20
Schroders 1650.00 75.00 5.08	Sheba 1100.00 -44.00 -3.85
Safeway 285.00 15.50 5.40	Redwood Group 156.00 -6.00 -3.70
BIG 667.00 24.50 3.61	Commercial Un 800 -25 -3.03

CURRENCIES



Pound	US\$	Change	%	Yr Ago	Dollar	US\$	Change	%	Yr Ago
Drifter	1.7065	+1.03c	1.8509	1.6509	Shilling	0.5880	-0.35c	0.5857	1.087
D-Mark	2.8212	+2.69c	2.4678	2.4678	D-Mark	1.7120	+0.57c	1.4937	1.4937
Yen	213.57	+13.13	183.61	183.61	Yen	125.20	+11.11	111.07	111.07
E Index	102.70	-0.20	90.50	90.50	E Index	104.90	+0.10	96.00	96.00

OTHER INDICATORS

at 3pm	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Chg	Yr ago	Next Up
Brent Oil (\$)	18.91	-0.21	22.26	GBP	114.00	3.90	109.7
Gold (\$)	310.75	0.65	382.65	RPI	159.50	3.7	153.81
Silver (\$)	4.94	-0.01	6.00			7.26	

www.bloomberg.com source: Bloomberg

Building societies pour scorn on Abbey National for pushing up mortgage rate

Mutual building societies yesterday attacked Abbey National for raising its mortgage rate by 0.25 of a percentage point. Nationwide, the largest remaining mutual society, questioned whether Abbey still wanted new mortgage business.
Andrew Varty reports.

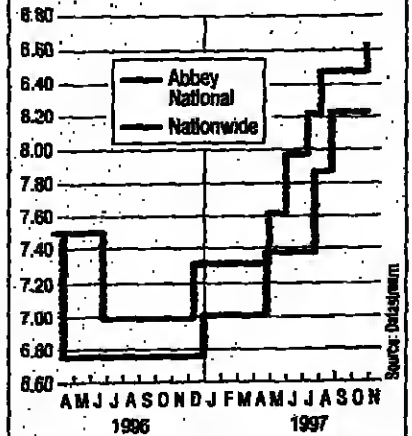
The debate over the benefits of mutualism was re-ignited yesterday when Nationwide said Abbey's decision to boost its standard variable rate to 8.7 per cent "makes one wonder whether they are serious about doing any new business".

Abbey's increase in the cost of borrowing is in line with the interest rate rise announced last week by the Bank of England. Halifax, which recently converted to a bank, said it was likely to take a decision on whether to follow the rise within a week.

The rise by Abbey prompted mutual building societies to mock the new banks for failing to give customers the best value on mortgages. In Abbey National's case, 1.6 million customers will see mortgage repayments rise.

A spokesman for Nationwide said: "Compared with our rate of 8.1 per cent, they are now 60 basis points higher. They can only be hitting their existing borrowers who may well be tied in to their mortgages."

Mortgage rates



"We are very sad that the Abbey have had to put their rates up and are concerned for all mortgage holders."

Nationwide said that it had loaned £1.1bn over the last six months. That compared with just £100m by Abbey National, which is 11-times its size.

Both Nationwide and Bradford & Bingley have issued a challenge to other lenders to keep their rates down as low as the mutuals. Bradford & Bingley, which has a variable rate of 7.95 per cent, committed itself last Thursday to leaving mortgage rates unchanged until at least the end of January 1998.

Abbey and Halifax both hit back at the remarks. Andrew Pople, retail managing director at Abbey, said: "During the course of the year, Abbey National has consistently passed on the benefit of base rate rises to savers, who outnumber borrowers by 7 to 1. We see no reason to change our approach on this occasion."

Abbey National said the changes would mean an extra £2.10 a week to the average borrower with a repayment mortgage. However, it has not yet announced new rates for savers, which it said would be announced shortly. A spokesman played down comparisons based on the variable rate, saying 60 per cent of all new mortgages were now fixed-rate mortgages.

A Halifax spokesman said: "We won't be making any announcement today, though now Abbey has moved it has altered the whole market. Any pressure for rate rises is coming from the savings side - from supermarkets and insurance companies."

Abbey's rise means that its average mortgage holder has seen repayments rise by 12.3 per cent since the general election in May. For a repayment mortgage of £50,000 borrowed over 25 years, monthly repayments were £339.60 before the election. Five interest rate rises later, the same borrower is paying £381.30. The across-the-board rise of 0.25 of a percentage point will affect larger mortgages more dramatically. For a 25-year repayment mortgage of £125,000, repayments have risen by 12.7 per cent since May, from £881.87 to £993.69.

OUTLOOK
ON THE UK ECONOMY
THE INDEPENDENT
12 NOVEMBER 1997



Optimism
of fears

150 من الالمان



OUTLOOK ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF RECESSION IN THE US AND THE OPTIONS FOR ALLIED DOMECQ

World-wide deflation: is it fact or fiction?

The threat of global deflation - à la 1930s - has suddenly become the fashionable thing to worry and talk about at City lunch tables. Is this just a passing fad, a bit like the new economic paradigm of a few months back (whatever happened to that theory?) and more an alarmist symptom of the present wave of stock market turbulence than anything else, or should we be genuinely concerned?

For stock market bears, the theory has become a very handy way of re-justifying their stance. In recent times stock market corrections or bear markets have generally been caused, at least in the Western world, by deteriorating liquidity as central banks raise interest rates to combat inflation. Plainly there's a bit of that going on in Britain right now. After yesterday's clutch of economic indicators, it rather looks as if last week's quarter point on interest rates won't be the last. Even so, this hardly justifies the present bout of jitters. Inflation is still in abeyance in most of Europe and North America.

Instead, the turbulence in Western markets has been caused by the opposite thing - the fear of deflation. The contagion has spread, moreover, not from Wall Street into the rest of the world, as it usually does, but from the Far East, from the developing Pacific Rim economies into Japan and then into the US and Europe. One feature of this phenomenon has been a tendency for bond and equity markets to decouple, for bond prices to rise even as equities are falling, much as they have done in Japan since the stock market bubble burst at the

end of the 1980s. This is highly unusual, for the two normally track each other, and a clear indication of deflationary forces at work, the argument runs.

Taking the real economy, the deflation theory works like this. The crisis in the Pacific Rim economies may not be of critical importance to the US and Europe, but it is to Japan, half of whose exports go to Asia. Here there's a double whammy for Japan's already weakened economy. Nobody will be buying on past levels and even if they were, Japan's competitiveness has been severely undermined by currency devaluation in the region. What's more, the consequence of excessive investment in the region is overcapacity and too many goods looking for a market.

Still reeling from the after effects of Japan's own speculative stock market and property bubble, Japanese banks now have a whole new raft of bad loans to come to terms with. No wonder Barton Biggs, Morgan Stanley's stock market guru, is advising clients to quit waiting for a recovery, cut their losses and bail out of Tokyo.

With no Asian market to turn to, Japanese companies and their counterparts in the region will fix their efforts on the one big growth market left, the US. In the words of Andrew Smithers, of the London based investment boutique Smithers & Co, "a weak yen would be part of the general devaluation of Asian currencies and would exacerbate the growing disparity in the US between the rise in costs of labour and services and the price of traded goods. This would pose a major threat to

the profits and cash flow of US corporations." A fall in the yen thus becomes the trigger for a further fall on Wall Street. In a worst case scenario, there's a trade war, pressure for protectionism, and, hey ho, it's the 1930s all over again.

Compelling isn't it? But actually rather unlikely, at least in this form. Here's the other side of the coin. World capacity and output have not been growing at an unusually fast pace; investment spending is at around, or below, its long-run average relative to OECD and world GDP, although it is at a cyclical peak in the US. There are glut and falling prices - but only in a handful of commodities, in particular in semiconductors, steel, possibly chemicals and cars. Because they are high-profile they exercise a tyranny over popular thinking.

Although some OECD countries have high unemployment, this is structural. Others - the US, UK, and the Netherlands - have unemployment rates at 20 or 25-year lows; wages are rising faster than inflation across most of the OECD. The Asian slowdown will affect the rest of the world, but world GDP growth is still expected to be 3-4 per cent, well above the post-war trend. Asian growth forecasts have been cut from 8 per cent plus to 6 per cent, or about 4 per cent excluding China - still not a slump.

Commodity prices, the bottom of the price chain, are not falling. Outside Japan, real interest rates are relatively high; if there were any evidence at all of a troubling economic slowdown, central banks could easily tackle it by cutting interest rates. This is not to argue for com-

placency. The repercussions of the Asian crisis are still far from clear, and it does seem highly likely there will be real economic damage both to Japan and the US. But that it will cause a slump, or even a recession in the US looks at this stage rather improbable. A reduction in US economic growth? Certainly. An end to Wall Street's bull market? Very probably. A big Wall Street correction? Possibly. But worldwide deflation? Mmmm.

Allied may have to file for divorce

Tony (just call me Teflon) Hales and his boss for the past 18 months at Allied Domecq, Sir Christopher Hogg, were in surprisingly chipper form yesterday. Their mood may have been lifted by the unfamiliar experience of announcing better than expected profits. They must have been cheered too by seeing Allied's share price rise in response to the broadest of hints that the company to its present form is destined for the history books.

The market's desire for change is understandable. You would have to look pretty hard to find a worse corporate performance than Allied Domecq's over the past five years, a period in which profits have stagnated, shareholders' funds have dwindled by a fifth and the share price, down 20 per cent to absolute terms, has underperformed the rest of the market by more than \$0 per cent.

It is quite some indictment of one of

Britain's biggest companies that its management can stand up and boast that its return on capital is now marginally ahead of its cost. Let's face it, this is hardly fling-your-hat-in-the-air good news.

Sir Christopher none the less managed to call it a turning point yesterday, even if he did look uncomfortably like a man who could think of better ways to wind up a previously successful career. For someone who created so much shareholder value by breaking up Courtaulds and who has overseen the rise and rise of Reuters, the shilly-shallying over what to do with Allied has left him looking tired and out of touch. Despite the fanfare, yesterday's figures were nothing very special. Strip out the £47m benefit of unwinding an unfavourable beer supply agreement with Carlsberg Tetley and underlying profits were down a bit in spirits, up a bit in pubs. Scratch the surface and this is still a group going steadily sideways.

But the figures are a sideshow. More important yesterday was the tacit admission that the merger of Guinness and GrandMet to form Diageo means Allied can no longer afford to sit around hoping everything turns out all right in the end. Allied may sell more hard booze than anyone other than Diageo, but its brands are second division and its claimed global spread is so much wishful thinking. If it is to stand a chance of competing with its new rival it needs to find a partner and quickly. Demerging may in itself do nothing for shareholders, but if a quick divorce is the only way to get someone else up the aisle, so be it.



Hong Kong crisis: Customers queue to withdraw money from the International Bank of Asia as armed guards deliver cash. Photograph: Bobby Yip/Reuters

Hong Kong brings run on banks under control

A concerted effort by the Hong Kong government, the regulatory authorities and the territory's big banks appears to have averted a potential bank run but it remains uncertain whether the banking sector is yet out of the woods. Stephen Vines in Hong Kong reports.

The beginnings of a run on the International Bank of Asia (IBA) and some of Hong Kong's smaller banks appears to have been brought under control following a full scale mobilisation by the government and other banks to provide both verbal support and offers of hard cash for any bank encountering problems as a result of the current turmoil in Asian financial markets.

Sir Donald Tsang, the Financial Secretary, yesterday spelled out the level of the government's commitment to ensure there were no bank failures.

He said that Hong Kong's Exchange Fund, with assets exceeding £45bn, "stands squarely behind this institution

[IBA] and will provide all the necessary financial support it may require to meet its obligations for as long as is necessary".

He described the bank as a "well managed, well capitalised banking institution". Sir Donald's boss, the Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, also emerged yesterday to say "the banking system in Hong Kong is fine and this particular bank is fine".

He added: "Because of rumours there are uncertainties among ordinary people which is understandable but they are more driven by rumours".

The bank faced a second day of queues with people wishing to close their accounts. It has reacted calmly to the crisis, quickly meeting all demands for withdrawals, even allowing customers to redeem time deposits before their due date and extending banking hours to clear the queues.

It says that the situation more or less returned to normal yesterday and that it has sufficient resources to meet any demands for withdrawals.

The IBA is a fast-growing, medium-sized bank, controlled by one of the biggest banks in the Middle East, the

Arab Banking Corporation. China Everbright Holdings, one of China's largest state-owned conglomerates, is a 20 per cent shareholder.

The parent company has pledged full support to its associate and transferred a "substantial" amount of cash to Hong Kong.

However, there is clearly pressure on the banking sector and a fear of accumulating bad loans as property prices take a dive and speculators get their fingers burned. For this reason the credit rating agency Moody's is currently reviewing its ratings for Hong Kong banks.

However, yesterday the Standard & Poor's credit rating agency published a report which stated that it was maintaining its relatively high credit ratings for territory's banks and believed that "the volatile nature of both the property market and the stock market in Hong Kong has always been taken into account in the rating of Hong Kong banks".

Relief over the situation in the banking sector produced a mood of cautious optimism in the stock market with the blue-chip Hang Seng Index closing barely changed after a day of mixed trading. Other Asian markets also inched upwards yesterday.

Optimism in Japan gives way to fears of a market collapse

Is Japan about to sink into a fresh deflationary spiral, with catastrophic consequences for the world economy? Barton Biggs, Morgan Stanley's legendary stock market guru, is advising clients not to wait any longer for that elusive recovery in the Tokyo market and cut their losses. Richard Lloyd Parry assesses Japan's growing economic ills and finds that remedies are in short supply.

hardship - but to any European who lived through the economic slumps of the 1970s and 1980s, the self-pity which has enveloped Japan for the last two years has looked very like the sulk of a spoiled brat which had its own way for too long.

Even if the pace does not satisfy everyone, the government of Ryutaro Hashimoto has at least begun the job of reforming Japan's financial institutions and exposing them to much-needed competition. The country's banks have gone a long way to writing off the bad debts left over from the collapse of the bubble.

Last spring, the government's cleverest economist, Eisuke Sakakibara, put it into words when he spoke of the country's "irrational negative exuberance", and for a brief few weeks, Japan began cautiously to chip up a little. Half a year later, that delicate dew of incipient confidence has evaporated completely, in the heat of a stiflingly dramatic summer.

Brave optimism has given way to almost unanimous pessimism in Tokyo: the question is no longer when the long-awaited recovery will get under way, but whether the stock market can pull itself out of a downward spiral which could have grave consequences far beyond Japan. After years of waiting for a rebound in the Tokyo stock market, many foreign investors are giving up on the country and ordering big reductions in their exposure.

The crisis has been precipitated by the wave of currency devaluations which swept through South-east Asia this summer, beginning in Thailand and spreading quickly to the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and now South Korea.

The currency drama is taking its toll on Japan in two ways. For a start, there is renewed pressure on Japanese banks, whose Asian creditors suddenly find the cost of their yen-denominated loans soaring. And secondly, the country's exports are suddenly extremely expensive in countries where spending, both corporate and consumer, is being cut back anyway.

Some 46 per cent of Japan's exports go to Asia, and two-thirds of these are demand-sensitive goods. As their currencies have plummeted in value, Asians have less money to spend all round, and less inclination than ever to spend it on imported goods. South Korea, for instance, accounts for 7.1 per cent of Japan's exports; for every 1 per cent decline in Korean GDP, the amount of Japanese goods the country imports drops by more than 3 per cent.

According to Jesper Koll, chief economist of JP Morgan Securities in Tokyo, the decline in Asian growth will cut Japan's exports by 7 per cent in the coming year. Reduced exports will lead to reduced production, lower corporate earnings and then to reduced wages, over-

time and finally reduced employment levels.

And if the fortunes of Japan's exporters are uniquely tied up with Asia, so are those of its banks. In Thailand, for instance, American banks have lent \$5bn (£3bn) to creditors whose repayments are suddenly 40 per cent more expensive than they were six months ago. For Japanese banks, however, the equivalent figure is \$37bn.

The continuing wobbliness of the Japanese banking system, despite genuine efforts to write off and clear up the remaining bad loans of the bubble period, was emphasised last week with persistent but unconfirmed rumours that a major regional player, the Bank of Yokohama, was planning to sell its stocks in order to balance its books. Speculation - denied by the bank - drove the Nikkei share average down by more than 4 per cent.

Further concern about Japan's banks was expressed yesterday by IBCA, the international rating agency which said it was reviewing its ratings of Japanese banks downwards. IBCA warned: "The persistent failure of the Japanese economy to recover from its long period of stagnation is burdening banks with continuing asset quality problems, while the weakness of the stock market threatens them with large valuation losses on their excessively large holdings of Japanese equities".

The general sense of ner-

vousness in the Tokyo Stock Exchange is compounded by anticipation of Japan's so-called Big Bang - the planned deregulation of the financial markets. The buffeting to which this will expose many firms is encouraging them to liquidate their assets to provide a safety net against imminent foreign competition.

The consequences of all this change are uncertain. In theory, deregulation, reform and the bracing winds of competition will in the long run whip Japan's companies and its economy back into shape. But the medium term is bleak. At best, the country faces a prolongation of the economic sluggishness which has already made it so miserable. At worst, a panic sell-off of stocks by Japanese companies could cause stock market collapses worldwide.

Modern Japanese are not used to biting the bullet and slogans like pain before gain are politically risky. The problem for Mr Hashimoto is that he cannot even release cash by cutting interest rates - because interest rates are virtually at zero anyway. In his last package, unveiled last month, the centre-piece was a feeble proposal to have more public holidays on Mondays, in order to encourage Japanese to spend more during their long weekends.

The most alarming thing about the present malaise is the almost complete lack of available remedies.

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THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

Business as usual at Amersham

When Amersham revealed it was merging with Norway's Nycomed to become the world's biggest supplier of diagnostic imaging agents just three weeks after it had swallowed Pharmacia & Upjohn's biotech division, the City took a breath and applauded. After all, Amersham's roots, making radioactive materials for Margaret Thatcher's Atomic Energy Agency, were hardly the auspicious ones of a company now rubbing shoulders with top-leaguers like Schering and Mallinckrodt.

Since the Norwegian tie-up was announced in early July, shares in Amersham have soared by a third. Yesterday's first results since that deal - interim from Amersham and third quarters from Nycomed - pushed the price up another 27.5p to 2222.5p.

The numbers themselves offer no real guide to the shape of the new company. The Nycomed deal was only cemented two and a half weeks ago and chief Bill Castelli says it is too early to confirm estimates of £40m a year cost savings. What the numbers do do is reassure that, despite the deal, it is business as usual for both companies.

Amersham's own Pharmacia business, supplying chemicals used in drug company research, looks a good buy. In just two months it contributed £6m, driving sales in the half year at Amersham's Life Science division 65 per cent ahead to £122m at constant currency and profits 55 per cent ahead to £22m. Cost savings of £30m a year over a three-year period should be possible.

On the Healthcare side, even excluding acquisitions, profits rose 58 per cent, driven by growing demand for Myoview, the heart-imaging agent, and the iodine seed treatment for prostate cancer.

Integrating Nycomed will be a big and potentially disruptive job, though Mr Castelli insists morale is high. Commercially the acquisition makes great sense, giving Amersham a full range of imaging agents and innovations like ultrasound. Concern over price pressure in Nycomed's core US contrast media agent business remains, though Nycomed's cost reduction plan looks on track. At current levels, the shares trade on

Nycomed Amersham: At a glance

Market value: £2.7bn, share price 2222.5p (+27.5p)

	Amersham				Amersham
	Year ended 31 March	6 months ended 30 September		*Pro-forma year ended 31 Dec	
Turnover (£m)	351	374	183	188	1900
Earnings per share (p)	53.2	63.8	27.5	31.5	105

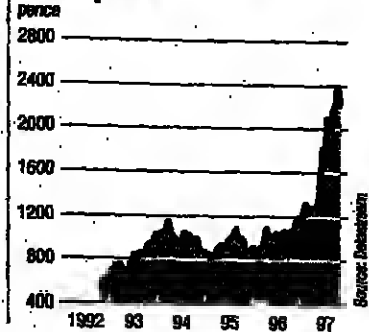
* Merrill Lynch forecasts

The merged company

Sales £768m £896m £1,483m

R&D spend £280m £244m £143m

Share price



over 20 times earnings. Until the group presents integrated figures next March, that looks high enough, particularly given the inevitable disruption associated with a large merger.

General Accident may face squeeze

The sun has been shining on General Accident in the last nine months. Literally, in fact, because underwriting profits were boosted by the absence of the usual, hefty claims caused by severe weather in the US. Since January, this has allowed the insurance giant to narrow a gaping underwriting deficit by 30 per cent to £111m.

Business is also bright at two other GA businesses. In Canada and Australia, underwriting profit targets have been met or beaten. GA plans further penetration of the Canadian market, following its £268m acquisition of Canadian General Insurance. This should realise savings of at least £75m a year.

Second, GA is performing well in the life insurance sector, where new premiums have leapt 31 per cent. This is due to two canny moves. GA bought Provident Mutual two years ago, when prices for life insurance companies were yet to rocket.

It has also sharply boosted the value it gives to its pension contract when policyholders stop paying in the early years: a vital selling point for the financial advisers who distribute its products. A further move into Irish life insurance should also reap rewards.

On the most sensible measure, operating profits before tax, GA has met expectations for the nine months to September with a 23 per cent rise from £311m to £384m. But it has sounded at least two notes of caution.

The group finance director, Philip Twyman, concedes that a 31 per cent growth in life insurance sales cannot be sustained. Second, competition in general insurance is driving premiums down. Unless unpredictable like the weather stay on GA's side, it may, with the rest of the sector, face a squeeze.

The shares fell 13p to 972p yesterday. But, on over 20 times 1999 forecasts, that is not enough to reflect GA's bearish tone. Sell.

Whitehead enjoys a feast

Consultancies are a feast or famine business. In boom times, they feed off clients' successes. In recession companies tend to cut spending on luxuries like third party advice.

Whitehead Mann, the recruitment consultancy, has enjoyed a feast since it floated last March. The shares, priced at 136p, hit a peak of 171.5p yesterday, up 13p, on the back of strong first-half figures. Efficiency gains and big contract wins meant pre-tax profits in the six months to September jumped by 42 per cent to £1.6m, ahead of most forecasts.

The company looks good on fundamentals. It has strong client relationships - repeat business counts for almost four-fifths of its core executive search operation. And its commitment to building a global network means it should continue winning lucrative international contracts. With companies looking to fewer suppliers to meet their global staffing needs, Whitehead's international spread looks attractive.

But could Whitehead Mann survive an economic downturn? The answer is probably yes. The company looks less exposed to cyclical fluctuations than some. Around 70 per cent of its business comes from headhunting senior directors for about half the UK's FTSE 100 companies. Businesses need chairmen and finance directors just as much, if not more, in bad times, when lower ranking staff may be cut, as in a boom. Second, Whitehead is far flung and not exposed to the vagaries of any single economy. And Whitehead has a small, but fast growing and cyclical resistant IT recruitment operation.

But Whitehead is not completely insulated. The fortunes of its selection division, which advertises for jobs in the £50k-£100k salary range, and its human resources consultancy, tend to rise and fall with economic activity. On a forward rating of 13. Fairly priced.

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN WILLCOCK



It was a good day yesterday for former Tory ministers looking for new ways to scrape a living. General Accident soaped up Lord Lang of Monkland, formerly trade minister Ian Lang, as a non-executive director. Another Scot, Lord Fraser of Carmyllie QC, former energy minister and Lord Advocate, was appointed non-executive chairman of JKC Oil & Gas, a London listed exploration and production company.

For the urban Lord Lang, once the MP for Galloway Upper Nithsdale, this is a return to well-known pastures. He spent 18 years working for an insurance broker north of the border before concentrating on politics. "GA was very well known to me then. I'm delighted to be rejoining my acquaintance," he said.

He's also currently deputy chairman of European Telecom, an equipment distributor based in Slough, and sits on the board of a number of Scottish investment trusts. "I've got one or two other things in negotiation," he adds enticingly. Lord Fraser likewise has a deep well of experience in his chosen field. While at the DTI he led trade missions to more than 25 countries, and he is a non-executive director of EFX Exploration UK and a lay director of the International Petroleum Exchange.

Bob McCrackin, chief executive of JKC, says the company's main asset is a 49 per cent stake in Poltava Petroleum, an oil and gas company operating in the Republic of Georgia and the Ukraine. JKC has also recruited Viscount Asquith OBE, a former diplomat at the British Embassy in Kiev, and Leonid Tkachuk, a Ukrainian oil man, as non-executive directors.

When asked where he came from, Mr McCrackin replied: "In 1645 I was Scottish." In fact he's from Ohio, and spent 14 years with Mobil.

British-owned investment banks may be a bit of a dog's dinner at the moment, but Dutch giant ABN Amro continues to go from strength to strength in London. ABN has poached Keith Edgington from UBS to supervise the bank's move

from half a dozen different sites in London to a flash new City building now under construction at 250 Bishopsgate.

Mr Edgington, 41, will report to Chris Tupker, who has the business-card-busting title of "senior executive vice president, Directorate General Network Management and Services, ABN Amro Bank NV".

Mr Tupker says disarmingly that the bank realised it needed someone of a higher calibre than it already had to supervise such a complex move, and when they went out into the recruitment market "the right person was very difficult to find."

Both commercial and investment banking activities will be moving under one roof, and Mr Tupker says that ABN will be leaning heavily on Mr Edgington's experience of running UBS's settlement and IT activities in Europe.

Mr Tupker is more than happy to squash speculation that ABN is considering a bid for a British investment bank (not that there are many left): "We're happy to grow organically at the moment."

Which doesn't stop ABN's corporate finance operation in the City from hovering up big signings. It has already made half a dozen this year. Yesterday it signed up Steve Gregg, an Australian with a bushy moustache, from Lehman Brothers as head of a new consumer products team. Hugh Scott-Barrett, head of corporate finance, says he is on the look out for more talent.

John Simpson, chief executive of Mayflower, the UK engineering group which may or may not bid for Vickers, was pictured last week posing proudly in front of a Chrysler Plymouth Prowler, a mighty American sports car for which Mayflower provides the body panels.

This week *Autocar* magazine reports that the Prowler, launched by Chrysler this year, is in huge demand in the US. However, the magazine notes: "Problems with paint quality and alignment of the aluminium bodies - made by British company Mayflower - have slowed production, which means Chrysler will only build 700 cars by the end of this year."

A Mayflower spokesman said yesterday: "The Chrysler Plymouth Prowler is a new and innovative product for which Chrysler has exacting standards. Mayflower has not delayed the ramp-up [the build up in production] and is unaware of alignment problems in the body. We do not paint, so paint quality can't be down to us."

If you're interested in buying a Prowler, by the way, you'll have to go the US and fork out \$39,000. The "modern hot rod" is available in shocking yellow and purple.

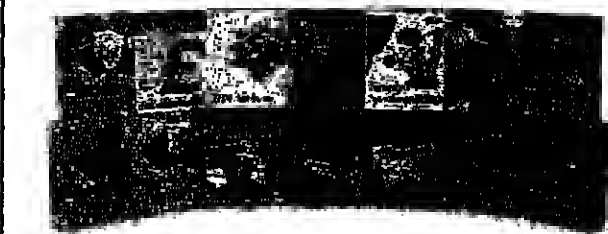
Clare Rodway, director of marketing at Nicholas Graham & Jones, the City law firm, recently fired off a series of announcements that the firm has "doubled in size in the last six years", with turnover up 17 per cent in the last financial year.

Ms Rodway called only days later to add that her pregnancy had just doubled in size as well - she's having twins. The intrepid spokeswoman is battling on at work until the end of November, and the sprogs are due in February.

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- 24 speed MAX LG CD-ROM drive
- Creative Labs 3D wavetable sound
- 14" SVGA 0.28dp screen (15" £70)
- +VAT = £82.25 extra; 17" £220
- +VAT = £258.50 extra
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- All standard features below

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£1408.83 Inc. VAT Model:789

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- 56K Rockwell voice modem
- 8Mb AGP ATI Rage Pro 3D graphics
- 24 speed MAX LG CD-ROM drive
- Creative Labs 3D wavetable sound
- 14" SVGA 0.28dp screen (15" £70)
- +VAT = £82.25 extra; 17" £220
- +VAT = £258.50 extra
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Barclays dismisses talk of merger with NatWest

Andrew Buxton, chairman of Barclays Bank, yesterday dismissed talk of a possible merger with National Westminster Bank as "market speculation" at the CBI conference. He did acknowledge that further rationalisation in financial services was inevitable but would neither confirm nor deny recent reports that Barclays had offered £6bn for Legal & General, the life assurance company. He further fuelled takeover rumours by re-iterating Barclays' commitment to the life sector. "The area of fund management and life insurance is an area Barclays is interested in", he said.

Mercedes halts deliveries

Mercedes-Benz was forced yesterday to suspend deliveries of its revolutionary model, the compact A-class, in order to rebalance the chassis. The announcement came after revelations that the car was unstable in certain conditions. The company said the production delay and other modifications to address the design flaws will cost DM300m (£103m). Until all the components required for the modification are available, production at the A-Class plant in Rastatt will be scaled down and delivery of produced vehicles is being suspended.

Kodak cuts 10,000 jobs

Eastman Kodak in the US is cutting 10,000 jobs and taking a \$1bn (£590m) pre-tax charge in the fourth quarter of the year. Half the charge will pay for job cuts, with the balance paying for the write-down of assets. The cuts will save at least \$1bn during the next two years.

Payout for BCCI creditors

Depositors with the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), which collapsed in 1991, are to be given a second payout. Next June, creditors will receive 11.5p for each pound deposited with BCCI. This follows a payment of 24.5p per pound deposited last December, and reflects ongoing progress by BCCI's liquidators in recovering funds.

Tunnel loses duty-free case

The European Court of Justice said it rejected an argument from Eurotunnel that European Union duty-free rules, which exclude sales on Eurotunnel trains, were not properly approved in 1991 and 1992. But the EU court ruled that Eurotunnel was justified in raising the issue in a Paris commercial court, despite an earlier adverse UK ruling. The court said its examination of queries on the way member states and the European Parliament agreed the duty-free measures "did not reveal elements of a nature to affect [their] validity". The court rejected arguments that EU governments went beyond their powers to amend European Commission proposals when they agreed the directives as part of single market tax legislation.

MMC wins time extension

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, has agreed to a request from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) for an extension of the time allowed for making their report on the proposed acquisition by Capital Radio of Virgin Radio. After representations from the MMC, notably that more time was needed to allow proper consideration of evidence recently submitted, Mrs Beckett has concluded that the reporting period should be extended from 14 November to 4 December.

Microsoft teams up with AIM firm

Microsoft, the world's biggest software company, yesterday formed an alliance with the AIM-listed minnow, Internet Technology Group (ITG). The pair are teaming up on the launch of a system which allows up to 25 office users to share access to the World Wide Web, computer files, databases, and electronic mail. Cathy Newman reports.

ITG's Global Internet, the UK's

third-biggest Internet service provider, said the deal would allow it to gain access to business customers and would enable Microsoft to achieve its aim of selling its software on the Internet.

The new service, Small Business Server, went live yesterday and costs £999 for five PC-users, or £1,650 for 25 users. It is aimed at companies with 25 or fewer personal computers. Laurence Blackall, ITG's chief executive, said: "Microsoft

has a great name and a broad reach and can get us in front of customers we wouldn't normally have reached."

This is not the first time ITG has linked with the software giant. Almost exactly a year ago, Global Internet agreed to supply Microsoft's browser software, Internet Explorer 3.0, to all its subscribers. Global Internet has 45,000 customers, 5,000 of which are small and medium-sized companies.

Also yesterday, Microsoft filed a 48-page formal response to the US Justice Department's allegations that it illegally forced computer manufacturers to install its Explorer browser as part of its Windows 95 operating system.

William Neukom, senior vice-president for law and corporate affairs, accused the US government of "stifling innovation" by alleging that Microsoft had violated anti-trust agreements. "It is a very serious matter when any agency of government proposes to extend its regulation to the extent of engaging itself in product design, especially in high technology products. That kind of interference in product design will stifle innovation," he said.

Shares in Menvier-Swan surge on bid approach

Shares in Menvier-Swan Group, the manufacturer of emergency lighting and security systems, surged nearly 25 per cent yesterday after the company said it was in talks with a third party which may lead to it being taken over.

Schroders, which is advising Menvier on the bid approach, made the announcement after the company's shares climbed as high as 265p. The stock closed 49p up at 254p, some way off January's high of 338p.

Menvier refused to comment on the suitors' identity and how advanced the talks were.

The company has been looking vulnerable after issuing a profits warning in September. That warning sent its shares spiralling 22 per cent to a year low of 217p. The company said trading conditions had been difficult and its largest customer had cut back on stock levels. Menvier had also been affected by the strength of the pound, industry consolidation and restructuring costs.

The difficult market conditions forced Menvier to cut more than 100 jobs, almost 10 per cent of the workforce.

- Cathy Newman

150 من الاجل

A letter from R. W. 'Tiny' Rowland

LONRHO - JCI

A lump of coal for Lonrho's Christmas stocking

Should shareholders look forward to the JCI/Tavistock deal?

Dear Lonrho shareholders,

Why not pick up a newspaper and look at South African mining stocks? That's what I do most mornings. Last week's closing price for Anglo American Coal: the high for 1997 was £70. Last week - £32. Anglo American Gold: the high was £49. Last week - £27. JCI: high for the year 674/4p. Last week - 244p. Randgold: high \$8.125. Last week - \$1.9375. Impala: high £9. Last week - £5.75. De Beers: high for the year was £24. Last week - £13.5. Goldfields: high £17. Last week - £10.

As a Lonrho shareholder, what would you decide to buy if you had £183 million, after selling off super assets like Lonrho's pan-African sugar estates and Lonrho's Metropole Hotels, at bargain prices? Would you sink our capital in the South African Tavistock coal mines and pay an unjustified premium to JCI at a time when every big South African company thinks of externalising its own investments?

The market outlook for coal is not favourable, according to Tavistock's own managing director. There's coal everywhere, better and cheaper, and JCI as a company can do nothing for Lonrho in terms of management. Just look at their record, the recent departure of some of their top people and their troubled gold mines. Can we really have sold our cash cows, Lonrho sugar (for £227 million, the best buy Illovo ever made) and the Metropole Hotels (high occupancy, steady sterling income) in order to reinvest the resulting capital sum so poorly?

Will it be good for Lonrho shares? Our shares having come down from 217p wallow around 100p. Our payment of £183 million sterling will do much for JCI's shares and aggressive Mr Keble and Anglo's director Mr Khumalo. They can be put in their labyrinth. See the chart, and feel the fear.

Shareholders may assume that it's all high finance and the Lonrho board, with Sir John Craven from DMG at its head, knows what is best. But this board, advised by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, promised shareholder value four years ago and a profitable three-way demerger. They've been paid millions for their advice. No part of that promise has been kept. So far Lonrho has only made sales which benefit the buyers - our board was even spectacularly outnegotiated by the Libyan Foreign Investment Company, which demanded and got £251 million upfront in cash for their one third share in the Metropole Hotels.

Let's face it, the demergers are off, although our board has never informed us that a policy once heavily promoted has been silently scrapped. We have been deceived. Prime assets that would have made demergers possible are gone, as is former chief executive Bock, the speculative architect of the scheme, who has said 'Auf Wiedersehen' and taken 180p a share from Anglo American without prior consultation with the board. Shareholders of Lonrho must look for the same-or-better-cash offer for their shares, for the present demands of JCI make it clear that the Anglo group and its associates treat Lonrho as a company already within its orbit of control.

Just look at Anglo group dividends and imagine that policy applied permanently to Lonrho, as it will be, if the sequence of deals with JCI which the board is about to embark on goes ahead.

The Tavistock coal purchase is not a stand-alone deal, but the first step in a chain reaction planned by the financial brains of Anglo. The purchase of Tavistock leads to the counter-purchase of almost 30% of Lonrho. The purchase of Tavistock leads to the enrichment of JCI and the impoverishment of Lonrho.

As to the actual purchase of the collieries it's not necessary to be familiar with coal mining to understand a poor deal. This one is backed by the same team that brought you the sale of the Metropole, the never-ending saga of the Princess Hotels and the reluctant Prince, and a bargain price for Lonrho's flourishing sugar estates which took 32 years to build up. Have you noticed that this week our large textile mills, previously the particular responsibility of new chief executive Nicholas Morrell, were given away, as they had debts of millions and losses of millions under his stewardship?

After three years, the only positive step taken by Lonrho is an eccentric decision to invest shareholders' cash in South Africa.

The negative policy of our board has been to sell the good assets which I secured for you, and to sell them at sometimes ridiculously low prices with unfavourable results for Lonrho shareholders (Krupp-Lonrho, Metropole, Lonrho Sugar, Harrisons, the Lonrho-Impala Platinum débacle). The results make one wonder if the buyers have been writing the price tickets. Now here come Mr Keble from Randgold and Mr Khumalo of JCI, both dependent on Anglo's goodwill, with their festive scheme to persuade the Lonrho board to buy some highly geared coal mines at an inflated figure, and so fund Mr Keble's grand purchase of a great slab of Lonrho shares, opening the way for cash-strapped JCI to pick over the rest of our assets at leisure. The price tag for Tavistock was set to the maximum figure possible without automatically triggering an EGM by exceeding 25% of Lonrho's capitalisation. Following my protest to The Stock Exchange it now appears that the purchase of Tavistock, which brings on the risk of overall control by JCI, will need shareholder approval at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Tiny Rowland

R. W. Rowland*

Wednesday, 12 November 1997

* R W Rowland is the largest individual shareholder of Lonrho plc

Who controls JCI?

SIMPLIFIED STRUCTURE*

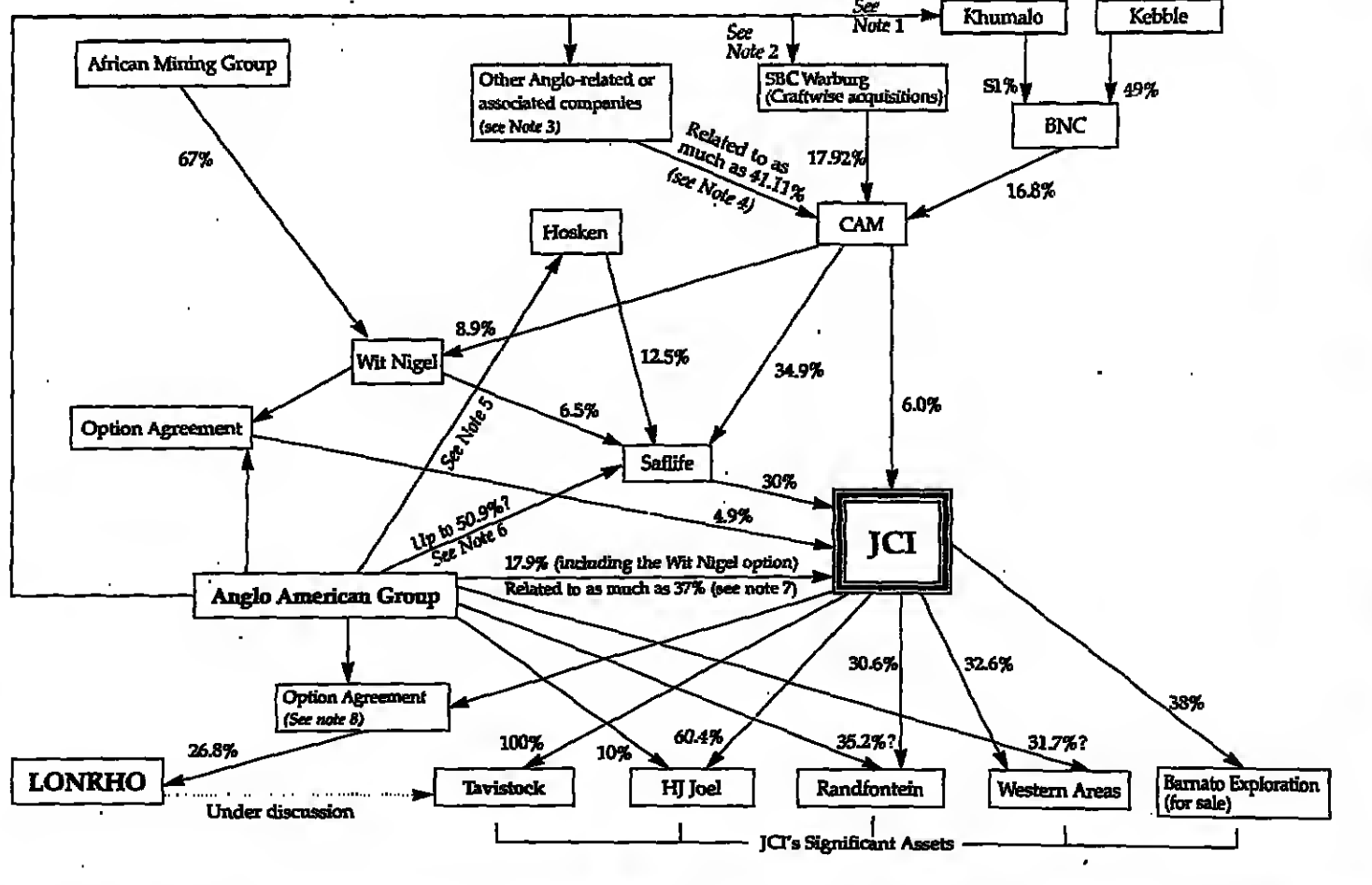
*The calculations in the chart opposite are based on publicly available information which has been obtained from sources which are believed to be reliable. The displayed information should not be relied upon since no guarantee for accuracy, completeness, or otherwise can be given due to a lack of complete available information, which would make precise calculations possible.

Sources: Circulars (Consolidated Mining, 30 April 1997; Saffie, 2 May 1997; Consolidated Mining, 17 June 1997; Consolidated Mining, 17 July 1997; NK Properties (NKP), 17 July 1997; Consolidated African Mining (CAM), 25 August 1997).

McGregor's 'Who Owns Whom in South Africa, 1997', McGregor Information Services (Pty) Ltd; Johannesburg Stock Exchange; Registrar of Companies, Pretoria, South Africa; Reuters; Bloomberg; Annual Reports (Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Limited; De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited; AngloGold; JCI; Western Areas; Randfontein Estates; HJ Joel).

Notes:

- 1 Mzi Khumalo is a non-executive director of Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Limited. He was helped to set up in business by the McCarthy Group, controlled by Anglo American.
- 2 SBC Warburg is Anglo American's and JCI's main investment bank, and has been involved in the advisory, financing and arranging of the 'sale' of JCI, and most of the latest related transactions. SBC Warburg's 17.92% of CAM, resulting from the so-called 'Craftwise acquisition', has been calculated from information provided in the various circulars (see above).
- 3 These companies acquired their stakes in CAM through an extremely complicated web of deals, which have been revealed and partly explained in a number of circulars (see above). The companies include various Anglo-related nominee companies (Standard Bank Nominees, First National Nominees, 81 Main Street Nominees), as well as the underwriters of the Saffie rights issue (including the Anglo-related Hosken, Warburg and Southern Life), and various financial institutions (including Southern Life).
- 4 The lack of transparency in the various deals and companies involved makes a precise figure for these companies' share of CAM impossible to determine. The calculated figure of 41.11% is based on calculations and certain estimates from figures given in the various circulars (see above).
- 5 Hosken is said to be controlled by First National Bank, which in turn is controlled by Anglo American (Source: McGregor's, 1997).
- 6 According to calculations based on McGregor information, dated 01/09/97, in which companies controlled, associated or related to Anglo American are shown to control the calculated figure of 50.9% of Saffie's share capital before the CAM restructuring took place (see circular Consolidated African Mining 25.8.97).
- 7 The figure of 37% is derived from calculations based on McGregor information, on 15/08/97, in which companies controlled, associated or related to Anglo American are shown to control the calculated figure of up to 37% of JCI's share capital. The figure of 17.9% is the figure announced publicly by Anglo American.
- 8 Subject to European Commission approval.



TAVISTOCK

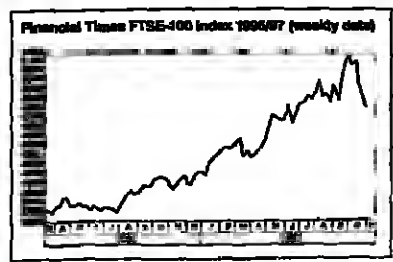
- "Tavistock is being sold to Lonrho simply because the money JCI will receive from Lonrho will go to fund its acquisition of Lonrho's shares." SA STAR, 23 OCTOBER 1997
- "The SA coal industry was in for a margin squeeze. 'It looks like a difficult year ahead', [Tavistock Managing Director Mike Rodgers] said." SA BUSINESS DAY, 24 OCTOBER 1997
- "Ingue MD David Murray said his company was expecting another fall in contract prices for steam coal." SA BUSINESS DAY, 24 OCTOBER 1997
- "It could be that international coal prices, a lot of which are set by Australian contracts into Japan, may be negotiated down." FINANCIAL TIMES, 30 OCTOBER 1997
- All the South African coal stocks have lost 40-50% of their market valuation during the last year.
- Tavistock, which is financially highly geared, has the highest export exposure of the South African producers with 63% of its production being exported. Therefore it is highly vulnerable to lower international coal prices.
- Duiker is currently valued by the market at P/E Ratios of 6-7, whereas a price tag of R 1.5-1.7 billion for Tavistock would value Tavistock at P/E Ratios of 12-13.4.
- Given the risks of any such deal for Lonrho in the current market situation of a downward trend in international coal prices. The known situation of a Duiker/Tavistock bond are insufficient to long term synergies of a Duiker/Tavistock deal are insufficient to justify giving Tavistock a highly inflated valuation.

LONRHO

- "The cash from Tavistock will help pay for this (acquisition of Lonrho shares), but selling an asset to a company that you will control sometime in the future means that JCI can get the assets back when it wants to." SA STAR, 23 OCTOBER 1997
- "Is this almost a case of Lonrho paying JCI a premium to allow JCI to buy Lonrho?" FINANCIAL TIMES, 30 OCTOBER 1997
- The failed demerger strategy of Lonrho's board has cost Lonrho's shareholders 54% of their investment since March '96. The company was to be split into three groups (mining, hotels, and Lonrho Africa).
- The sale of Lonrho Sugar to provide dividend cover has killed any chance of floating Lonrho Africa, the last of the three promised demerger stories.
- According to the Sunday Times, "it is understood Lonrho is ready to talk to possible buyers and is likely to reject a demerger of the agricultural and motor distribution portfolio..."



1 Sunday Times 5 October 1997



JCI

- "It is a pity that JCI has not really been an empowerment exercise, unless you consider Brett Keble to be one of the previously disadvantaged." RON DOWN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AFRICAN MERCHANT BANK, SA FINANCIAL MAIL, 31 OCTOBER 1997
- "... JCI executive director Brett Keble has clarified the following: Prior to the NKP deal JCI chairman Mzi Khumalo had no direct stake in Saffie." SA SUNDAY TIMES, 9 NOVEMBER 1997
- "At the date of issue of this circular, the beneficial and non-beneficial interests of the Saffie directors in Saffie shares were as follows: M G Khumalo, Beneficial-Direct: 4 395 943 shares; 10.7% (Percentage of issued capital)." SAILIFE LIMITED, CIRCULAR TO MEMBERS, 2 MAY 1997. (PRIOR TO THE NKP-DEAL)
- (A) Anglo's influence over JCI after the Saffie deal, according to McGregor's will appear to be about 37% of JCI via various shareholdings held by companies controlled, associated or related to Anglo American including certain nominee companies and pension funds of their own group.
- (B) The main assets of JCI (Western Areas, Randfontein Estates and Joel) appear to have Anglo American as a substantial shareholder of more than 30% in the case of Western Areas and Randfontein Estates. Anglo therefore would be the main beneficiary (besides JCI) of any restructuring of these mining assets.
- (C) Anglo American has a number of their key executive board members on the board of JCI, which seems to give them the majority in any vote.
- (D) In August 1997 Anglo American and its associates together with SBC Warburg (Anglo American's investment bank) seemed to control the major part of Saffie, which was defined at that time to be the controlling shareholder of JCI and was supposed to be controlled by Mr Khumalo & Mr Keble.
- (E) Having introduced the Consolidated African Mining (CAM) structure to the web above JCI, it has become obvious that Consolidated African Mining, which is supposed to control Saffie, which is supposed to control JCI, is not controlled by Mr Khumalo and Mr Keble.
- * McGregor's, 1 September 1997.
- * These nominee companies represent Anglo's De Beers' shareholdings in various companies, which are either members of the Anglo Group or are known to have Anglo De Beers as major shareholders.
- * McGregor's, 15th August 1997.

teams
IM firm

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approach

Body Shop faces relegation from the second division

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Body Shop International, the environmentally friendly cosmetics creation of Gordon and Anita Roddick, is finding the stock market climate increasingly difficult.

Its shares fell 2.5p to 168p which would indicate it faces the indignity of being demoted out of the supporting Footsie index, the FTSE 250.

Such a fate would be a wounding blow to a high profile retailer which, although it has worn its heart on its sleeve, is clearly bewildered by its failure to attract a strong City following.

With Footsie and 250 changes due to be announced next month, the market's

trader funds are preparing for the expected changes. If Body Shop's fate is sealed the shares are likely to come under pressure before, possibly, rallying on hopes of re-admission.

The Roddick's company is not the only one in danger of relegation to a wilderness area which, in football speak, is not far removed from the Vauxhall Conference.

The gyrations since September's review would also indicate that Courts, the furnishing chain, and the Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries must face life outside the 250 index.

Among those set for inclusion are up-and-coming Jarvis, the construction and railway maintenance group, and Admiral, a computer group. Jarvis, down 5p to 317.5p was 4.75p two years ago. Admiral, 71.5p in 1993, rose 5p to 63.5p.

The blue-chip Footsie index is also scheduled for a series of changes, including the recruitment of Nycomed Amer-

The rest of the market had a lacklustre session with Footsie off 13.1 points to 4,793.7 in uneventful trading.

British Steel inflated trading volume by, for unexplained reasons, rebuying through Cazartore a 93 million July deal at 155p; the shares fell 2.5p to 147.5p.

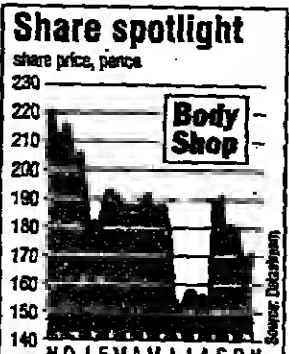
There was also a setback for British Aerospace, off 25p to 1,060p. For the Government continues to dilly and dally about fitting the foreign earnings. BAE revealed overseas earnings of 29.39 per cent of its capital. BAE and Rolls-Royce are forced to limit foreign shareholdings to 29.5 per cent. They have made frequent representations for the ceiling to be lifted and when Labour swept to power it was assumed the limit would quickly be increased to, say, 49.5 per

cent. But so far a deafening Whitehall silence. If BAE's overseas fan club continues to grow and breaks through 29.5 per cent it will be forced to demand the last foreign arrivals sell their shares, possibly at a loss.

Rolls-Royce ended 5p higher at 219p.

Allied Domecq, on its surprise dividend increase, led the

Share spotlight



Footsie leader board, scoring a 27p gain to 508p.

Vague stirrings that Asda and Safeway could have revisited their supermarket alliance were evident. Asda rose 2.5p to 160.5p and Safeway 15.5p to 395p. Goldman Sachs is keen on the sector.

BTG, the former British Technology Group, rose 24.5p to 667p on Dresden Kleinwort Benson interest and Merrill Lynch gave FirstBus, winner of the Bristol Airport auction, a whirl, lifting the shares 6.5p to 211.5p.

Maverix-Swain, the electrical equipment group, surged 49p to 254p as a possible takeover was disclosed. Bluebird, the toys group, held at 102p with Guinness Peat, a persistent buyer of underperforming shares, picking up a further 540,000 shares, in-

creasing its interest to nearly 10.5 per cent.

Engineer Spirax-Sarco dropped 13.5p to 651.5p as SBC Warburg turned negative and DKB hit housebuilders, calling most lower with, for example Barrat Developments, down 2.5p to 256p. Hanover International, the hotel chain, held at 124.5p. Chairman Peter Eyles acquired 4,000 shares at 124p and now has 0.64 per cent. His buy seems to dash bid hopes. In August Mr Eyles said Hanover had received an approach which had not led to an offer.

Lofus Road, taking in the Queens Park Rangers football club, rose 2p to 34.5p on managerial sackings. The shares touched 106.5p at the turn of the year. Like most football clubs they have found the market a difficult pitch since being floated at 72p a year ago.

TAKING STOCK

The blood shortage is directing attention towards Haemocoil, which has developed a blood filtration system that, in effect, does away with the need for many blood transfusions.

The struggling healthcare group, up 0.25p to 3.5p, has had a wounding time, running into financial difficulties and hit by a series of marketing problems. Three years ago the shares were 182p. Haemocoil believes it needs a little help to grow. It is involved in talks which could lead to a reverse takeover.

John Lusty, the acquisitive niche food group, continues to seek acquisitions and is likely to clinch a deal soon. Interim profits rose 159 per cent to £609,000 and year's profits should be around £1.9m against £753,000. The shares edged ahead 0.25p to 9p.

52 week High Low Stock Price Chg Yld P/E Code

Alcoholic Beverages	52 week High	52 week Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
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Dunwoody ride to steal the show

The horse that would have provided the prime attraction at Cheltenham on Sunday, last season's top juvenile hurdler, Grimes, is to miss the meeting. With National Hunt racing in need of a star performer to turn out it is lucky that Mr Mulligan and Richard Dunwoody are ready to pair up for the first time on Saturday.

The end of the Flat season last Saturday allowed the jumpers to move centre stage. Unfortunately, few of them have taken up the call and after Newbury's card yesterday featured only 31 runners the track has managed to go one worse today.

To compound matters, Christy Roche has decided that Grimes, who comfortably defeated the Triumph Hurdle winner Commanche at Leopardstown last month, is not yet ready to make his first trip to Britain for Sunday's Murphy's Draughtflood Handicap Hurdle at Cheltenham.

The four-year-old, who was the best backed horse this week for the Champion Hurdle, is now down to as low as 14-1 (with Ladbrokes, 20-1 with Coral) for Cheltenham in March.

Richard Edmondson, NAB Party Animal (Worcester 1.00) NB: Traceability (Kelso 1.10)



Chance: Good prospects

and a good jockey so hopefully all will go well with him. Jim Old expects his Champion Hurdle hopes, Collier Bay and Jynx, to reappear within the next three weeks.

Jockey Club focuses on head injuries

Experts on sports head injuries from Britain, Australia and America are to take part in a Jockey Club seminar.

The two-day conference entitled "Concussion and Head Injury in Sport" is being held in London on 30-31 January in conjunction with the Medical Advisers of Professional Sports.

Administrators and medical staff of sports where head injuries are a hazard will attend. "It is 10 years since we last reviewed the situation and medical opinion has moved on," Jockey Club chief medical adviser Dr Michael Turner, said.

Skip Away aimed at breaking Cigar's record

Skip Away, brilliant winner of Saturday's Breeders' Cup Classic in California, has arrived in Florida for a rest before being aimed at the Gulfstream Park Handicap in February.

Skip Away is in good shape after his Hollywood Park victory according to Sonya Hine, who trains the colt for his wife, Carolyn.

The couple hope that the grey can eventually lower the all-time earnings record held by Cigar. Accordingly, Skip Away will in 1998 contest only those races exceeding half a million dollars in value.

NEWBURY

HYPERION
1.20 Javelin Cool 2.50 Northern Startlight
1.50 Mutual Agreement 2.20 Faustino
2.20 Daraydan 3.50 SKYCAD (nap)

GOING: Good to Firm; Hurdles - Good.

Left-hand course level with a few hills. The track is in good condition. The going is good to firm. Hurdles are good.

ADMISSION: Members £14; Ladies £10; Children £5 (all ages). Accompanied 17-year-olds or under free all enclosures. CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRAINERS: D. Nicholls - 9 wins from 58 runners (20.4%); C. Park - 15 (26.2%); N. Henderson 10 (16.3%); M. P. 11 (17.2%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A. Maguire 7 (12.3%); R. Dunwoody 16 (26.2%); M. A. Fitzgerald 16 (26.2%); C. Llewellyn 16 (26.2%).

FAVOURITE: 1.20 Javelin Cool (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0; 2.50 Northern Startlight (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0; 3.50 SKYCAD (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Snow Board (15).

1.20 FURLONG CLUB NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,765

1.20 Javelin Cool (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0; 2.50 Northern Startlight (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0; 3.50 SKYCAD (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0.

1.50 LIONEL VICK MEMORIAL NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £5,100 added 3m Penalty Value £3,539

1.50 Javelin Cool (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0; 2.50 Northern Startlight (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0; 3.50 SKYCAD (14) (A. Maguire) 6.0.

1.10 DEVINE LINE DANCING NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 110yds

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Adams allowed to leave Derbyshire

Chris Adams was yesterday granted his freedom from Derbyshire by the England and Wales Cricket Board's Registrations Committee.

The highly rated batsman, released from his contract with the Midlands county after a stormy relationship with their committee over the past two seasons, successfully fought to be downgraded from a List One to a List Two player at yesterday's meeting at Lord's.

It gives the 27-year-old, believed to have been offered a £100,000 contract by Sussex, total freedom of movement, rather than restricted to just a handful of prospective new counties if he had kept his List One registration.

The regulations state that only two List One players can be signed by a county in a five-year period - a rule designed to protect the wealthier counties recruiting all the best talent.

A statement from the ECB read: "The decision was taken because it was felt Derbyshire had misinterpreted the regulations as, having released the player from his current contract, he could no longer be a List One player."

However, the ECB stressed: "There should be a 'cooling off' period of 14 days in this matter during which time the player should not be able to conclude a contract with any county, although he can negotiate terms and enter into

discussions if he so desires."

Adams' downgrading to List Two makes him available to every county and is likely to spark a football-style transfer scramble for his services, with Warwickshire and Kent believed to be joining Sussex in the chase for the player.

Nottinghamshire yesterday completed the signing of the Zimbabwe leg-spinner, Paul Strang, as their overseas player for the next two seasons.

The 27-year-old Test player put pen to paper after flying to England to hold further contract negotiations with Nottinghamshire officials, who switched their attentions to Strang after failing to persuade Shane Warne to play county cricket.

Strang enjoyed a hugely successful season with Kent, for whom Carl Hooper replaces him as overseas player, and claimed 63 first-class wickets and scored more than 500 runs.

"It's a vital part of any team planning to have the matter of your overseas player resolved at an early point in proceedings, which is why we are delighted to have Paul on board," Nottinghamshire's cricket manager, Alan Orr, said.

Strang said: "It was sad to leave Kent in many respects but I'm glad that I've been given this chance. There is a lot of potential at Trent Bridge and there are exciting times ahead."

Myles Hodgson

Hero McGrath injured

Australia 373 and 294-6
New Zealand 349 and 132
Australia win by 186 runs

The Australian fast bowler Glenn McGrath is doubtful for the second Test against New Zealand, after aggravating a groin injury in the 186-run first Test win yesterday.

McGrath will see a specialist in Sydney tomorrow before deciding what to do, after struggling to play through the injury during his match-winning haul of 5 for 32 in New Zealand's second innings.

McGrath, who has now taken 162 Test wickets, said: "I'll just have to see what the specialist says." The team's physiotherapist, Errol Alcott, said McGrath had felt pain in the same part of his left groin operated on in May last year during hernia surgery.

The second Test, in Perth, starts on 20 November. Alcott added: "He can obviously bowl with what he's got and be effective - but it depends on what the expert thinks."

McGrath effectively ended New Zealand's last-day run chase by grabbing four wickets in 22 balls during the half hour before lunch, which reduced the Kiwis to 69 for 5.

New Zealand's last Test win was in 1956, when they beat Australia by 100 runs in a Test at Sydney.

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Myles Hodgson

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Football

International Friendly

FA Cup

FA Cup

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Worcester

Leonard believes in rookie revolution

First rugby union principles dictate that experience counts for everything in the mysterious underworld of the front row, but England have flown in the face of orthodoxy by throwing two rookies into this Saturday's Test with Australia.

Chris Hewett chews the fat with Will Green, Andy Long and the old-stager, Jason Leonard.

"You win nothing with kids," pontificated Alan Hansen, the celebrated know-all from Anfield, in the course of a now infamous *Match of the Day* pronouncement a couple of seasons back. Embarrassingly for him, Manchester United's pre-pubescent pearls proceeded to win the Premiership title at a canter and in so doing, they dealt a fatal blow to the obsolete "age before talent" philosophy that has crippled England's sporting progress for more decades than anyone cares to remember.

The cricket selectors acknowledged the sea-change by picking a teenager, Ben Holliwell, at Test level last summer. Now the rugby men are at it, naming five youthful new caps for this weekend's intriguing confrontation with the Wallabies. What is more, two of them will perform in the stern, savage arena of the front row – until now, a place for grown-

up greybeards rather than juniors bearing the last traces of bum-fluff.

According to the traditionalists – and there are still plenty to be found in the corridors and committee rooms of Twickenham – prop forwards are meant to put in a good seven or eight years at the coalface before even dreaming of a first cap and a few free nights in the Petersham Hotel. Will Green, the 24-year-old tight-head specialist from Wasps, has hucked the trend in only his second full season of top-flight club rugby.

A fast mover, eh? Not as fast as Andy Long, the Bath hooker with whom Green will spend Saturday afternoon in exceedingly close proximity. Long has played six – yes, six – Premiership games in a first-class career stretching all the way back to, um, September. Last season, the outsized 20-year-old was training with the West Country kingpins but playing for Bournemouth, his home club, in the South West Two East division of the *Courage Championship*. For the uninitiated, that is somewhere down near the earth's core.

"When I got to Bath there were five or six hookers already in situ, so opportunities were obviously going to be few and far between," Long said yesterday. "I was quite happy to train at the Recreation Ground but I needed to play as well, so after discussing my position with the coaches, it was agreed that I should go back home at weekends for a run-around."

"This season, it's been different. Gareth Adams had re-

tired through injury, Graham Dawe had packed in as well and Neil McCarthy had moved to Gloucester. What was more, Federico Mendez was struggling with injury. I knew Mark Regan (the England incumbent and a Lion in South Africa) was going to sign, so competition was bound to remain intense. There was just less of it in the numerical sense.

"The club gave me an early chance and the great thing about Bath is the fact that if you play well enough, you keep your place. Sure, I've played only a handful of big games, but they've been against some of the best bookers Britain has to offer – Phil John, Jonathan Humphreys, Barry Williams – and of course, I'm up against Mark every day of the week in training. Our next meeting should be a real barrel of laughs."

If Long has been fast-tracked – Jacques Villeneuve would have struggled to cover a similar distance at the same speed – Green's prospects have been the subject of enthusiastic debate for rather longer. A career tight-head who joined Wasps from school, he picked up the tricks of the trade from Jeff Probyn, whose unique approach to scrummaging – and, some would say, the wholesale circumvention of rugby's rule-book – frustrated French, Argentinian, New Zealand and Australian front rows for six hugely entertaining years.

"Jeff was pretty cagey when he was still first-choice at Wasps, but he let me into a secret or two after packing it in," recalled



Jason Leonard (right) relishes facing Australia on Saturday with new partners, tight head Will Green (left) and hooker Andy Long

Photograph: Peter Jay

Green. "I wouldn't say I expected to get the nod for this match, even though I've been part of the national set-up for a while, but now it's happened, I'm looking forward to getting stuck in. Scrumming is a key phase now and that should be fine by any prop. You have to love the set-pieces because it's where you earn your corn."

No one loves the eyeball-to-eyeball physicality of the scrum more than Jason Leonard, capped 55 times and very much the main man in the eyes of his youthful confreres. On the face of it, the 18-stone Harlequin will have his work out against the Wallabies. Not only must he nurse the new boys through their ordeal, but do so while reac-

quainting himself with the peculiar dynamics of life on the loose-head side of the front row – a position he has not filled under Test conditions since 1995. No problem, insisted Jase as he introduced himself to his latest partners at Roehampton yesterday.

"I consider myself a loose-head prop first and foremost, so I'm glad to be back there. Any-

way, Will deserves the tight-head spot the way he's been playing. What will I say to the two of them on Saturday? I'll have a quiet word, I suppose, but I want them to go out and play their natural games. They don't need me to hold their hands; they've been selected and that's good enough for me."

"My only advice will be: 'Get

out there and bust a gut. Don't save anything for the last 10 minutes because a Test goes so quickly you'll miss it. Run until you drop and scrummage until your shoulders fall off.' Above all, they should enjoy the experience. For all my years in the team, I'm really excited about Saturday. If I'm right up for it, they must be feeling fantastic."

RFU calls in head-hunters for Twickenham appointment

The Rugby Football Union has appointed a leading recruitment firm to help find Twickenham's first chief executive. The London-based Heidrick and Struggles will work alongside the RFU, and its recently appointed interviewing panel, a group that includes Cliff Brittle, the management board chairman, Fran Cotton, the national playing committee vice-chairman, and Nigel Wray, Saracens' owner.

The new arrival, who will probably start work in January, succeeds Tony Hallett, the act-

ing chief executive who resigned three months ago after English rugby's bitter feud between clubs and RFU ended.

"The appointment of a highly qualified chief executive is key to our future plans," Brittle said. "The person we select will be an experienced and successful senior manager in business, capable of playing a pivotal role in managing and developing what is now a major business in its own right."

Mark Regan, the exed England hooker, has an immediate chance to prove Clive Wood-

ward, the England coach, wrong when he lines up for Bath against Tonga tonight.

Regan missed out on England recognition behind his club colleague Andrew Long and Leicester rival Richard Cockerill against Australia at Twickenham this weekend. He packs down in a Bath eight, which includes internationals Kevin Yates and John Mallett in the front row, the lock Martin Haag, the flanker Eric Peters and the No 8 Steve Ojomoh.

The game is Tonga's final warm-up fixture before they

tackle Wales at Swansea on Sunday.

Southern hemisphere unions are planning action to halt the drain of leading players to northern hemisphere clubs after a meeting of officials from South Africa, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand in Buenos Aires over the weekend.

"The matter will be given top priority," Rian Oberholzer, chief executive of the South African Rugby Football Union, said yesterday on his return from the meeting. "We will be holding in-depth discussions to

devise mechanisms to keep top players in their home countries."

Argentina and South Africa have been particularly hard hit by departures. Garry Pagel, the Springbok prop, joined Northampton earlier this month, while the new South African coach, Nick Mallett, had three meetings with the international lock Fritz van Heerden to try to dissuade him from joining Leicester. Mallett failed.

The pair joined a steady haemorrhaging of South African talent. Francois Pienaar and Joel Stransky left for Eng-

land a year ago and among other South African internationals playing in Europe are the loose forward Rudolf Straeuli, the hooker John Allan and the full-back Gavin Johnson.

SARFU have already said anyone playing in the northern hemisphere will not be considered for international selection. They also considered enforcing a 180-day qualification period before allowing Van Heerden to turn out for Leicester. The rule is laid down in International Rugby Football Board regulations on player movements.

Sleightholme move bolsters Northampton back division

Jon Sleightholme, out of favour with both Bath and England, yesterday agreed a three-year deal with Northampton for an undisclosed sum. The right wing's move to Franklins Gardens means the Saints can field international threequarters from three of the four home nations.

Sleightholme was placed on the transfer list by Bath almost a month ago after the club bluntly informed him that he was not considered a part of their long-term plans. Yet Bath were well aware of his potential

market value and put a six-figure price tag on his head.

Cardiff, the biggest spender of the Welsh clubs, expressed an immediate interest but told Bath they were asking "silly money" for the 25-year-old former teacher. Northampton, who have just made a substantial investment in the services of Gary Pagel, the South African prop, were not so hesitant, although they refused yesterday to discuss the details of Sleightholme's move.

— Chris Hewett

Hoddle rules out Ferdinand role as World Cup sweeper

Rio Ferdinand has come a long way in a short time, but thoughts of the West Ham defender being England's sweeper in the World Cup finals are premature.

Guy Hodgson was at Bisham Abbey to hear Glenn Hoddle pour cold water on a change of tactics for France.

As a player Glenn Hoddle was hoisted on top of one or two bandwagons, and yesterday the England coach moved quickly to apply the brakes on another. Rio Ferdinand, he contends, will be a good player, but maybe he has not arrived yet. Ferdinand, young, gifted and centre-back, stood out in training at Bisham Abbey yesterday as any 19-year-old aiming to be counted among the cream of the country's footballers should. He was not gauche, cowed or out of his depth as England prepared to meet Cameroon on Saturday.

It was not his defending that marked him out as special – Gareth Southgate, Sol Campbell, to name but two, excelled in that department – but his use of the ball in possession. He looked the epitome of the sweeper Hoddle is looking for to swiftly change defence into attack. The irony is that the youth who has defied time to arrive so soon might have too little of it left to become a fixture by next summer's World Cup finals.

If he had 14 games to experiment with instead of six, Hoddle said, he could risk a new system whereby the third central defender becomes the offensive starting point. "But to play a real sweeper, someone who can come out with the ball like Germany's Matthias Sammer, I'm not so sure we've got the time. Maybe Rio in the future, but I think seven months is probably going to be too quick."

Ferdinand was removed from one England squad because of a drink-driving offence, a lesson amid others the West Ham player needs to absorb, according to Hoddle. "He can hit

it right to left 60 yards, but I'm not sure he can go left to right," he said. "He's young, he's got time to learn." As for off the field: "We are keeping an eye on him."

There will be just as much attention on his play, too, because a lack of time to build tactics around him does not mean Ferdinand will not be included in the 22 for France. On the contrary, Hoddle was yesterday throwing open the doors to players aspiring on the fringes.

Liverpool's Jamie Redknapp and Michael Owen, who will train with the squad this week, are just two of the "35 or 36" players in Hoddle's mind. The lesson he had learned in last summer's *Turnout*, he said, is not to think in terms of a dream team. And if the first 11 is not settled, the final party for France is nowhere near.

"You need a spine in a team but going into a World Cup it would be a mistake thinking you have a best 11," he said. "The reason is that you reach the quarter or semi-finals and you're never going to get that team. Suddenly two get in-



Back to basics: Glenn Hoddle (left) and Rio Ferdinand in training at Bisham Abbey yesterday

Alisport

jured and two get suspended and you can feel in a negative mood. I don't want to send that message to my players."

That spine probably includes Tony Adams, whose right ankle injury has forced him to withdraw from Saturday's game amid talk of the Arsenal defender needing another operation and a six-week lay-off. The news of Teddy Sheringham's knee, which was the subject of Alex Ferguson's concern last weekend, was likewise not good.

Hoddle will talk to the Manchester United manager about the striker this afternoon when

the telephone bill is unlikely to be piffing, because United's Paul Scholes (chest cold), Gary Neville (hamstring) and Nicky Butt (arm) are the other players causing concern.

Their potential loss is another's gain, as Hoddle wants his players to be scrambling over each other to get to France. "That's the challenge I've laid down to the players: give me the biggest headache they can," he said.

No one will be happier than the England coach if he is reaching for the aspirin on Saturday night.

Brown's fringe players face formidable French

Only Brazil could have presented Scotland with a more formidable test than World Cup hosts France.

Phil Shaw, in Saint-Etienne, sets the scene for tonight's friendly with a lot at stake.

Scotland arrived in this grey industrial city yesterday to find, like W C Fields in Philadelphia, that it was closed. Armistice Day, rather than any lorry-drivers' blockades, accounted for the subdued welcome, but Craig Brown is anticipating the storm after the calm in the Geoffroy-Guichard Stadium tonight.

The encounter with France will, the Scotland manager believes, be an unusually competitive friendly. As World Cup hosts, Aimé Jacquet's team did not have to go through the rigours of qualifying. They were therefore keen to pit themselves against opponents who would not treat the game as a glorified training exercise.

That is where the Scots – seen here as *Typiquement Bri-*

tanique" – came in. Without a match until late March, when Denmark visit Glasgow, they jumped at the opportunity to test themselves against high-quality opposition, and in particular to see how certain fringe candidates might fare.

At least three players more accustomed to warming the bench – David Weir, Billy McKinlay and goalkeeper Neil Sullivan – are likely to be in the starting line-up. There may also be a debut, in a cameo role, for Matt Elliott. Leicester's London-born defender qualifies for Scotland because his late granny was from Partick.

Weir, set to win his third cap as replacement for the injured Colin Hendry, has been outstanding in the Premier Division. "Hearts didn't get to be top of the league with a weak central defence," Brown said.

McKinlay has played 21 times for his country, mostly as substitute, but is now earmarked to deputise for the absent Paul Lambert as midfield anchor man. Brown is excited by the Blackburn player's ability to drive forward and score.

David Hopkin, who possesses a similar knack, is also

certain to figure at some stage. The Leeds captain has had what Brown called, tongue slightly in cheek, "a magnificent international career – one-and-a-half competitive games, two goals", yet needs to be viewed in more exalted company.

Brown is sure France will provide that, despite the omission of Dugarry, Lama, Loko and Karembeu, and media complaints that they are too dull. "Unless we've gone to South America and played Brazil, this is the toughest fixture we could have chosen," he said.

"We're playing the World Cup hosts who went 30 games unbeaten not long ago and were only knocked out of Euro '96 on penalties in the semi-final. They'll be one of the favourites next summer and justifiably so. Nine of their squad play in Italy – guys like Djorka Arifi, Deschamps and Desailly – where they're key men."

"I have to emphasise; this is France '97, whereas our priority is France '98. But we're playing an outstanding team and there will be a big, partisan crowd, so it should give us a terrific yardstick."

Scotland's record under Brown stands at 16 wins, three defeats and 18 clean sheets in 24 competitive games. They have fared less well in friendlies, winning four and losing seven out of 12, though that, he would doubtless argue, is what occasions like tonight are for.

FRANCE (4-3-1-2) (probable): Barthez (Monaco); Thuram (Paris Saint-Germain); Desailly (Lyon); Latta (Lyon); Deschamps (Lyon); Petit (Arsenal); Zidane (Juventus); Djorka Arifi (Internazionale); Lesaux (Bordeaux); Guerin (Lyon).

SCOTLAND (3-5-2) (probable): Sullivan (Blackburn); Weir (Heart of Midlothian); Billy Duff (Blackburn); Colin Hendry (Blackburn); Matt Elliott (Leicester); Gary McAllister (Sheff Wed); Colin Ross (Blackburn); Boyd (Colt); Gallacher (Blackburn); Duff (Preston).

Lazio put £5m price tag on Casiraghi as Rovers ponder player's demands

Blackburn Rovers have been told they can have Pierluigi Casiraghi for £5m. But the Lazio striker's personal demands of £28,000 a week on a three-year contract, which would bring the club's expenditure on the deal to £9m, may, as reported yesterday, prove a stumbling block.

Rovers' owner, Jack Walker, is reluctant to break the club's wage structure, and a leading Italian agent has said that Casiraghi has also been in talks with another Premiership club, so the

player's future remains far from settled.

Gerry Francis, whose situation as Tottenham manager became even more desperate following Saturday's 4-0 defeat at Liverpool, denied yesterday that he is set to replace Stewart Houston as Queen's Park Rangers manager.

"Stories linking me with Queen's Park Rangers are total rubbish and a complete fabrication," said Francis, who was in charge of QPR from 1991 to

1994. "I have not had any contact whatsoever with anybody from the club."

Alan Curbishley, the Charlton manager, has emerged as Houston's most likely successor. Although QPR fans want Francis to return, moves have begun to lure Curbishley, with an official approach imminent.

Houston believes that he and his assistant, Bruce Rioch, were sacked to appease impatient shareholders. The axe fell 24 hours before the Rangers

chairman, Chris Wright, was due to face last night's annual general meeting of Lotus Road plc, the holding company which also embraces Wasps rugby union club.

"With that meeting coming up, perhaps I shouldn't have been too surprised," Houston said. "In business these days people demand success right away."

Ron Atkinson has ruled himself out of the running for the vacant Sheffield Wednesday post. The former Coventry manager,

who left Wednesday in acrimonious circumstances in 1991 to take over at Aston Villa, said: "I have had no contact with anyone from Sheffield Wednesday and I will not become the next Wednesday manager."

The former England manager Bobby Robson, currently the director of recruitment at Barcelona, has been linked with an imminent return to one of his former clubs. Sporting Lisbon, as technical director.

— Alan Nixon

صلى الله عليه وسلم

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Formula One hands Schumacher a pointless punishment

Formula One dispensed its peculiar brand of justice yesterday when Michael Schumacher was found guilty of deliberately turning into Jacques Villeneuve at the Grand Prix of Europe, but escaped without a ban or a fine, while Williams and McLaren were cleared of colluding in the same race.

The biggest surprise, however, was that anyone should be surprised by the outcome.

Sweeteners all round. You can't get fairer than that.

The verdict on Williams and McLaren was obvious once the decision on Schumacher had been announced at a World Council meeting of the sport's international governing body, the FIA, in Slough yesterday. It served to confirm suspicions the two cases were linked by more than the event at Jerez.

A smokescreen created by the leaked tapes of pit-to-driver conversations during the grand prix and allegations of a Williams-McLaren conspiracy to influence the title contest had apparently worked. Ferrari, said to have been involved with senior Formula One officials in the release of the tapes, were concerned with ensuring the availability of their No 1 driver for the start of next season and that was duly achieved.

Max Mosley, president of the governing body, a lawyer and skilled politician, said that to ban Schumacher from races next season would have been "futile". Instead, the 28-year-old German was stripped of his runner-up position in the championship and committed to participate in a road safety campaign to be organised by the FIA and the Eu-

ropean Commission next year.

Many observers remain convinced Schumacher and Ferrari, major attractions in the Formula One show, have been given preferential treatment and that Mosley and his cohorts have given a fresh meaning to the term "Grand Prix Circus."

Such distinguished figures as Jackie Stewart, three times world champion and now a team principal, had called for Schumacher to be banned. But Mosley said: "Although the act was apparently deliberate, it was instinctive and not premeditated."

He said the 24-strong council had considered a ban, but decided it would serve no purpose. "It would not be a deterrent in any sense because there is not a driver who would not do the same in 1998 if it meant being banned for races in 1999 but winning the championship in 1998."

BY DERICK ALLSOP
MOTOR RACING CORRESPONDENT

He claimed that had Schumacher taken Villeneuve out of the race the judgement would have been the same, thus handing the title to the Canadian.

Mosley said: "It's still a very serious matter and it's a major penalty we have imposed. Schumacher did the wrong thing, obviously, but while he may be one of the greatest drivers of all time he is a human being and every now and then he will make a mistake. He admitted he did it deliberately but instinctively. Had he thought about it for one second he would have allowed Villeneuve through."

The incident revived memories of Schumacher's infamous clash with Damon Hill and Ayrton Senna three years ago, but Mosley insisted: "That was a different type of accident."

Schumacher presented a suit-

ably contrite countenance and claimed he had not got off lightly. The world champion of 1994 and 1995 said: "For me it's quite a tough decision losing my second place because for Ferrari to have second place in the championship means something. But I have to admit I made a mistake and I do accept the penalty."

"The last couple of weeks have been tough for me, not having won the championship when I was confident I could do so. I had some sleepless nights. I did not want to admit at the time what I had done, but I am human, I can make mistakes. I never expected a ban because the accident happened in 1997. The people involved in the situation see it far less dramatically than the press. I saw Jacques after the race and we had a drink together. We had a good relationship and that has not changed."

Schumacher said he would have been willing to involve himself in a road safety campaign even had he not been required to, but casting him in the role of model driver for the world's young invited further ridicule on the authorities. Mosley responded: "His presence will attract the attention of people, especially young people, to wear seatbelts."

The punishment baffled Damon Hill. The Englishman had sat with the other drivers before the fateful race and listened to Mosley's warning that anyone who transgressed would be dealt with severely.

Hill said last night: "It doesn't sound as serious a punishment as we were led to believe by Max before the race. This just doesn't seem to match up. As for Michael's explanation that it was instinctive, well it's also an

instinctive thing not to do things in that way. Having his points taken away is like having your rubbish taken away from you. The points this year are of no interest at all to him."

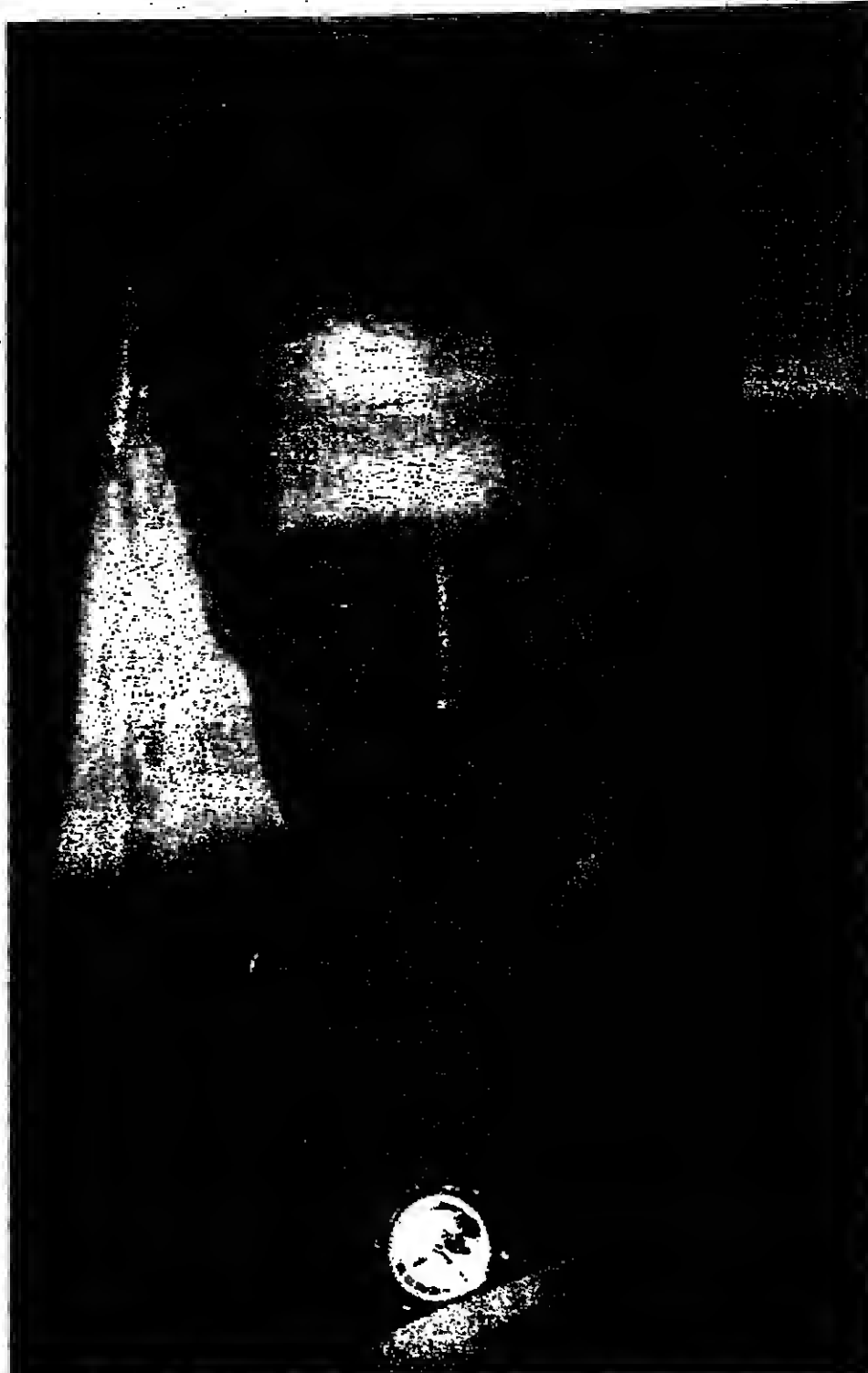
Nikki Lauda, the three-times former world champion, argued that Schumacher had been dealt with harshly. "It's a brutal decision," Lauda said. "I'm surprised because Schumacher, until Jerez, had had a good season in difficult conditions. It seems brutal to punish a mistake like this. I fear that if this type of decision becomes commonplace then people will lose interest in motor sport because spectacular manoeuvres will effectively be outlawed. From now on, every overtaking move is a risk."

Mosley rejoined his colleagues to consider the Williams-McLaren case, and re-emerged to announce they had been cleared. It had been alleged they conspired to assist Villeneuve, who in turn allowed McLaren's Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard, through to take first and second places.

Mosley said: "The World Council is quite satisfied there was no arrangement between Williams and McLaren to fix the outcome. What did happen was that Williams approached McLaren and several other teams asking them not to interfere in the fight between Villeneuve and Schumacher and this they agreed to do."

"When it came to the end of the race, Williams' sole concern was that Villeneuve should finish in the points which was all he needed to do to win the title and they reminded him of this and were desperate he should not fight the McLarens in his damaged car. This scenario is very rare."

"It's an extraordinary set of circumstances to have the leading two racing wheel-to-wheel in the last race but I can believe quite sincerely there was no arrangement to fix the race."



Serious mood: Michael Schumacher contemplates his controversial punishment at a press conference at RAC headquarters in Slough yesterday. Photograph: Allsop

The verdict of the president

'Apparently deliberate, but instinctive and not premeditated' Max Mosley on Schumacher's collision with Villeneuve

There is no driver competing in 1998 who would not be ready to accept the ban in 1999 if he could win the championship in 1998. It would not be a deterrent in any sense Mosley on why it would be 'futile' to ban Schumacher in 1998

I think it is perfectly clear that the race in Jerez was not fixed and no Formula One race has ever been fixed Mosley

Finishing second in the FIA championship is an amazing achievement and to have it taken away is a serious punishment Mosley

Revised 1997 final world drivers' championship

1 J Villeneuve (Can) Williams-Renault	95
2 M Senna (Bra) Williams-Renault	73
3 D Coulthard (GB) McLaren-Mercedes	55
4 M Schumacher (Ger) Ferrari	50
5 M Hakkinen (Fin) McLaren-Mercedes	27
6 G Berger (Aut) Benetton-Ford	27
7 E Irvine (GB) Ferrari	26
8 J Herbert (GB) Sauber	16
9 J Trulli (It) Minardi	10
10 J Magnussen (Den) Team Lotus	9
11 J Montoya (Col) Williams-Renault	8
12 D Hill (GB) Williams-Renault	7
13 R Barrichello (Br) Stewart-Ford	6
14 A Wurz (Aut) Benetton-Ford	4
15 J Trulli (It) Minardi	3
16 M Salo (Fin) Tyrrell-Ford	2
17 P Dita (Rom) Arrows-Yamaha	2
18 N Larus (Is) Sauber	1
19 M Schumacher (Ger) Ferrari	Physically declined

Cynical decision from a sport with a short memory

A show that survived and prospered after the death of Ayrton Senna will have scant problem coping with the global condemnation of their governors' latest deliberations.

Come the opening race of next season, when Michael Schumacher and Jacques Villeneuve square up for their rematch, the attention of the world's media will be focused still more intensely on Formula One.

And who will be deriding the authorities as chumps then?

Patently the logical course would have been to ban Schumacher for one to three races. Even if you accept Max Mosley's argument that the sport's world

governing body, the FIA, had to issue a deterrent, a suspension on top of losing runner-up place in the 1997 world championship would have been acknowledged as fair and appropriate.

By retaining Schumacher and Ferrari on the bill, the ringmasters have ensured all the major attractions are in place and the outcry will help fuel the publicity machinery through the close season.

Schumacher will be cast as the villain, Villeneuve the hero. Perfect. And if Schumacher again demonstrates he is the world's greatest driver, yesterday's skirmish near Heathrow Airport will be old news. The

road show moves on, generating its own momentum at every turn.

In its macabre way, the coverage of Senna's death, in 1994, served to perpetuate the mystique of the grand prix arena and its courageous gladiators.

COMMENT

Collisions such as Schumacher's with Villeneuve at Jerez, and with Damon Hill at Adelaide, in the final race of 1994, are trivial by comparison but sustain the tension, the smell of danger, and the controversy. To suggest Formula One is a joke, that its or-

ganisers have lost their credibility, may have substance in a sporting context, but no relevance in their unashamedly commercial world.

Senna, like Schumacher, was as ruthless as he was brilliant. Accepting defeat was anathema to him. The compulsion that drove the Brazilian to the pinnacle of his profession was the very force that propelled him into Alain Prost's car in that violent clash at the start of the 1990 Japanese Grand Prix.

Packing the German off to do what amounts to community service is comparable with Eric Cantona's "punishment"

for practising his footwork on the chest of a Crystal Palace fan. Of course it is difficult to suppress cynicism, but just as a lot of youngsters were inspired by the Frenchman and his tuition, so might Schumacher's guidance prove beneficial and we should not deny positive measures.

Schumacher says he will learn from this experience and do things differently in future. Perhaps he will. But the likelihood is that someone, somewhere, will do precisely the same thing again. And Formula One will have more publicity to feed on.

— Derick Allsop

FOOTBALL

Palace poised after angry Middlesbrough pull out of Padovano transfer

Middlesbrough pulled out of the chase for Michele Padovano yesterday after accusing his agent of demanding an illegal payment.

The clubs had agreed a £1.6m fee and the Juventus striker was due to arrive at the Riverside Stadium yesterday afternoon with his representative, Marcello Bonetto, to sign a contract until June 2001 and undergo a medical.

However, the deal was soon off. "We had agreed a financial package, but the deal has broken down because Middles-

brough Football Club were asked to pay a fee to an agent of £200,000 (£118,000 net)," the club said in a statement. "Middlesbrough Football Club is angry and can see no justification for this. Furthermore, Fifa regulations specifically preclude it. As a consequence we have been informed that the player will not be travelling to Teesside."

The Middlesbrough decision leaves the way open for

Crystal Palace, though the Palace chairman, Ron Noades, said that he has yet to talk to the forward, but will be meeting Juventus representatives soon to discuss both Padovano and the possibility of the Italian buying a stake in the club.

"We will be negotiating personal terms with the player, hopefully during the course of this week," Noades said. "I have been having talking to

Juventus about them taking an interest in Crystal Palace and about Padovano. The Padovano negotiations are on a straightforward, transfer basis. We reached agreement on price with Juventus some time ago."

The owners of Juventus have been in contact with Palace, among other English teams, including the struggling Manchester City, about the possibility of investing money

in them. With no reserve-team football in Italy, any deal would allow the Italians to farm out promising youngsters. "I have been talking to Juventus about taking an interest in Palace," Noades said. "It won't be finalised, because of their time constraints, until next summer."

"We won't be a nursery club for them. That is not what we are interested in at all." Juventus are owned by a holding company, IFT Spa, who bought out Fiat last year.

— Alan Nixon

Huddle's surprise, page 30

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3454, Wednesday 12 November By Aquila

Across

- 1 Solid jazz-fans are prosperous people (3,4)
- 5 Girl I have contracted with a formal letter (7)
- 9 Chap on foot (9)
- 10 Clergyman on horseback to go faster (3,2)
- 11 Beachcomber, with foot out, is less wet (5)
- 12 Short-lived things — hear 'em peep endlessly in the wild? (9)
- 14 Unimagined condition of the bill, say? (14)
- 17 Pilgrim today is so different — one might visit Giza (14)
- 21 Open lines from Douglas, possibly? (4,5)
- 23 Main arterial road carrying oxygen to distant parts (5)

Down

- 1 Waltos's work in a number of keys? (6)
- 2 Six in test is commonplace (7)
- 3 To me, a burr is troublesome in shrubbery (9)
- 4 Ploughman with an interest in company? (11)
- 5 Fifth of November — and no old penny for the guy! (3)
- 6 Spirit on street is to play idly (5)
- 7 Transposed and expressed by poet (7)
- 8 Coffee points to media having nothing on! (8)
- 13 Here, lake-poet turned out without ale originally. Who authorized that? (5,6)
- 15 Snye taking in chow, perhaps? There'll be fierce competition (3,3,3)
- 16 Gasp if fingers caught inside top hole, say? (8)
- 18 Where girls' exercises are done correctly (7)
- 19 County losing tail gets a fifty — that is showing a dream quality (7)
- 20 Hear about winning medal for field event? (6)
- 22 Cost of sitting university in glen (5)
- 25 Mate aboard ship a long time (3)

France vs Scotland

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